



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

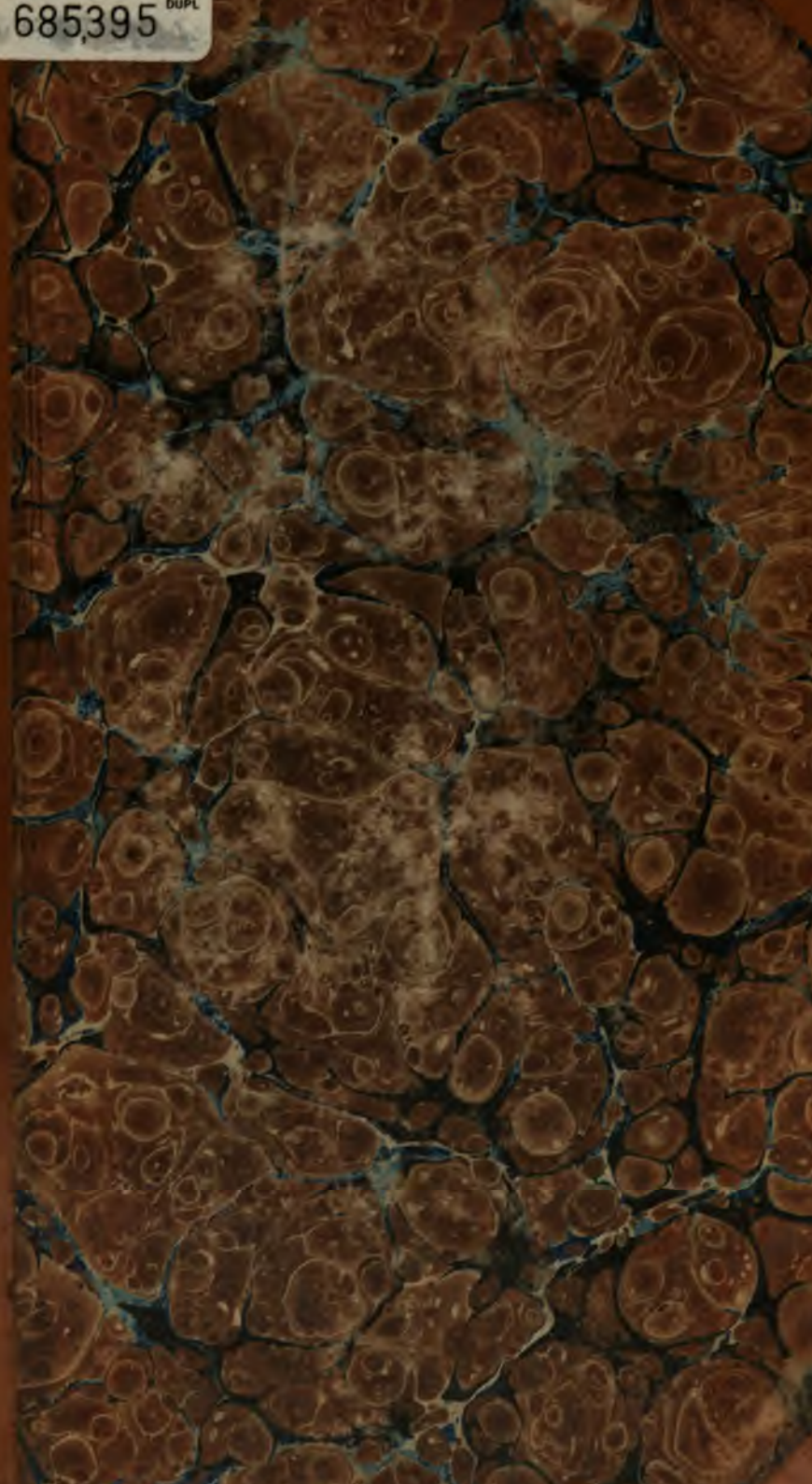
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

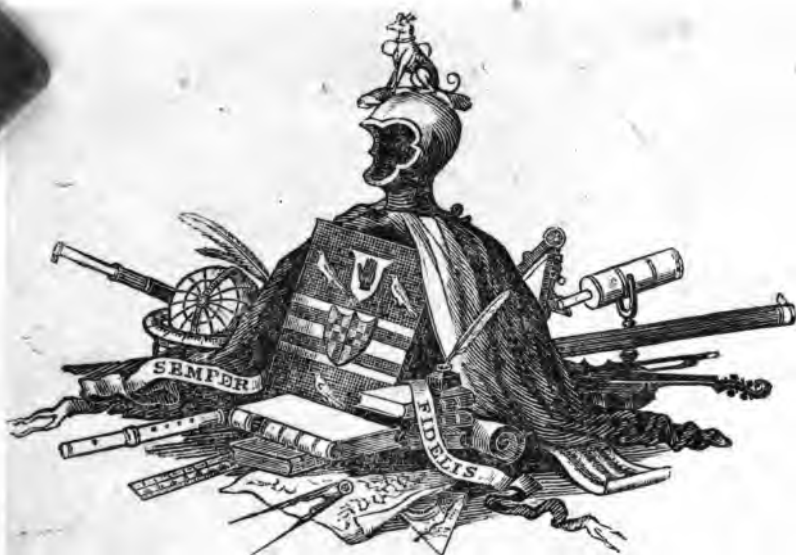
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

A 685395

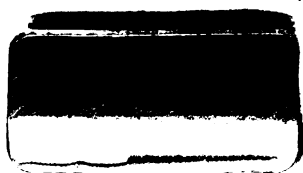
DUPL



Erskine (David Stewart, 11th
Earl of Buchan)



Sir John Smith, Bart.



Buchan: David Stuart, 44(89)
Erdane, 11th 2nd

Essays on Life & Writings of
Plutarch of Saltoun & the Poet
Thomson ... with some Pieces of
Thomson never before published. 1792.
Contemp. half calf, marbled bds.

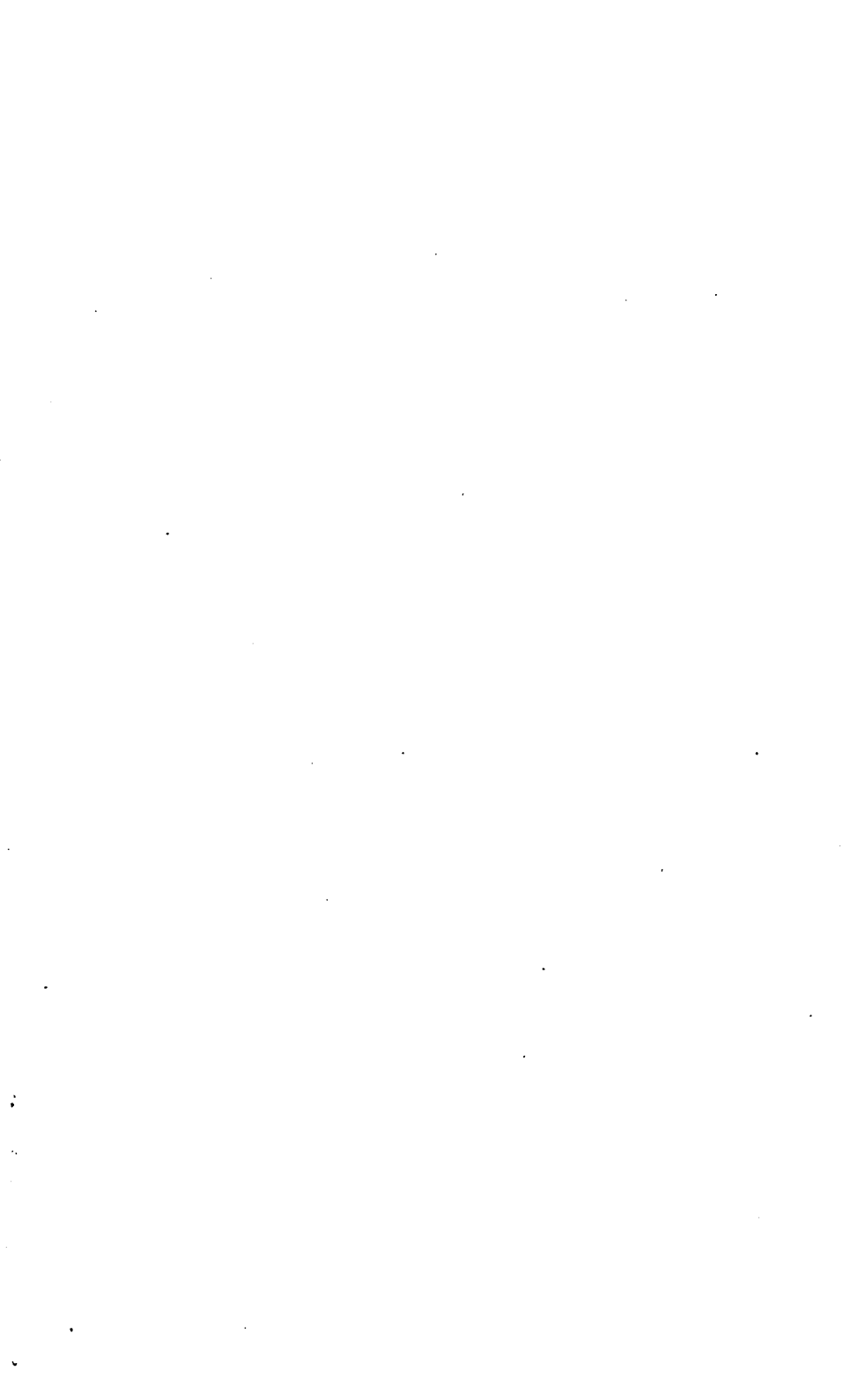
✓ LC £1.0.0
RCL

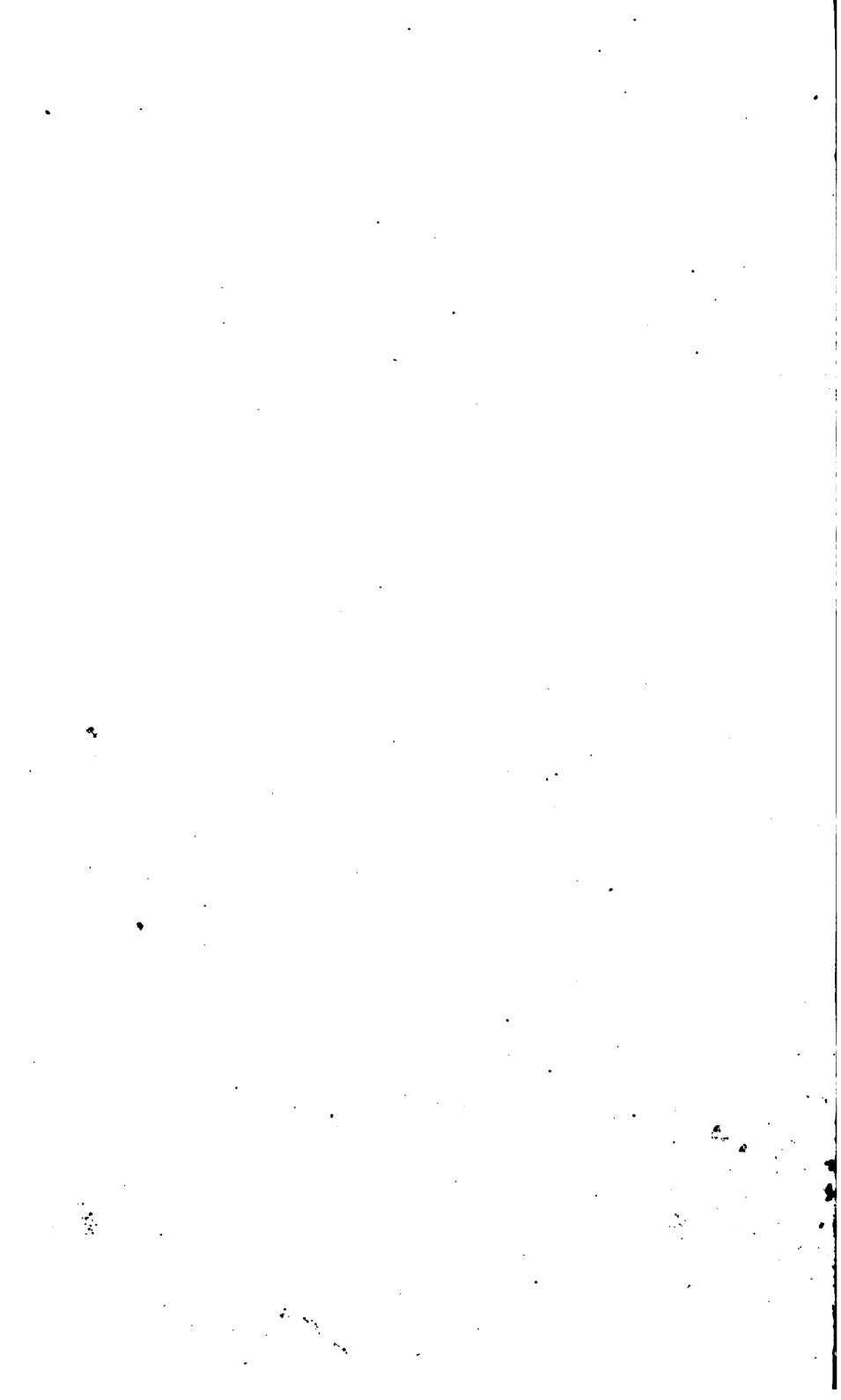
Important for its Burns
interest

~~Ex NY 104~~ ~~104~~ ~~104~~ Rice 100











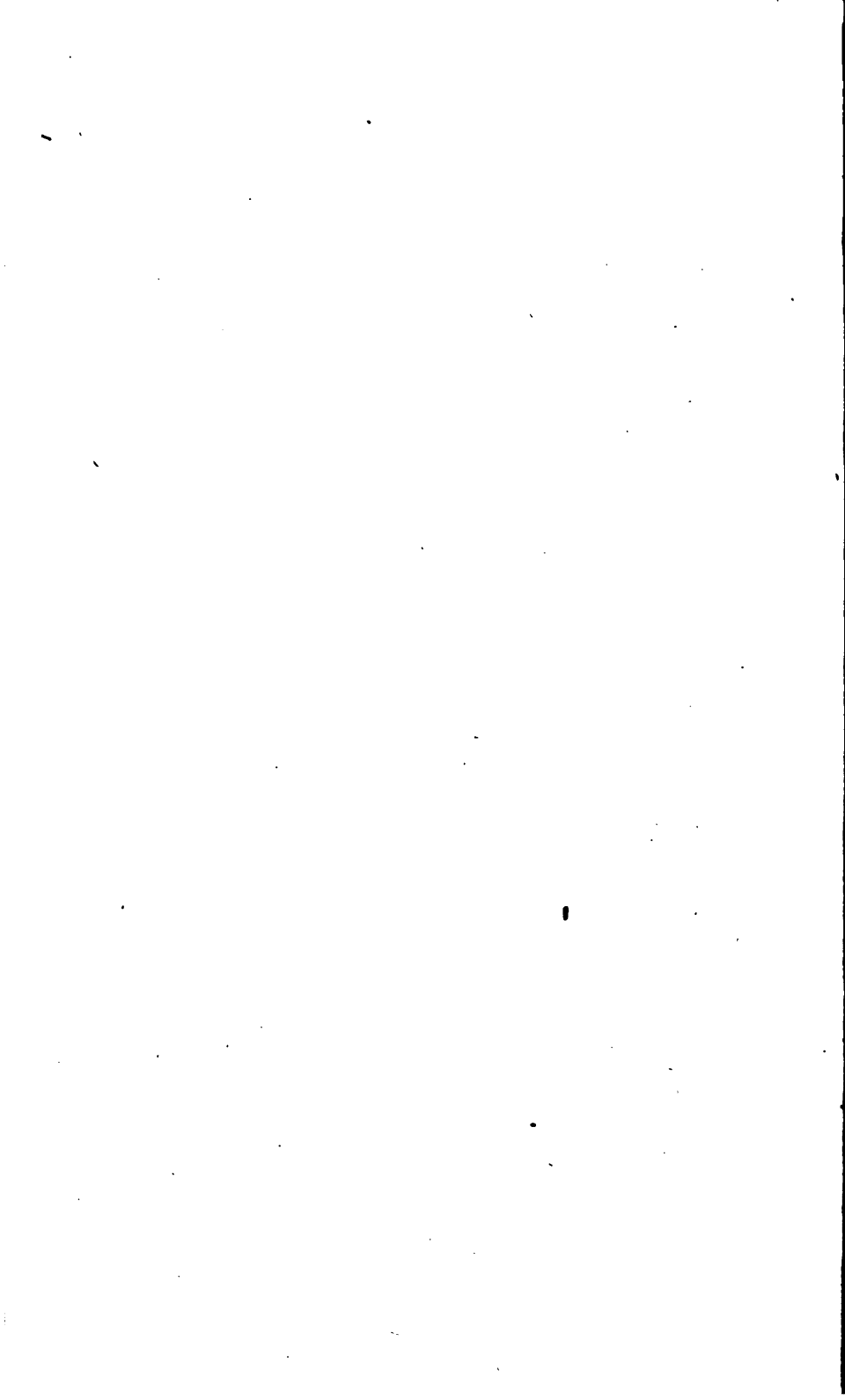


Andrew Fletcher.

From an Authentick Portrait, in the Collection of the Earl of Buchan.

London Published Sep: 21. 1792 by J. Debrut.

E S S A Y S
ON THE
LIVES AND WRITINGS
OF
FLETCHER OF SALTOUN
AND THE
POET THOMSON.



E S S A Y S
ON THE
LIVES AND WRITINGS
OF
FLETCHER OF SALTOUN
AND THE
POET THOMSON:
BIOGRAPHICAL, CRITICAL, AND POLITICAL.

With some Pieces of Thomson's never before published.

By D. S. EARL OF BUCHAN.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. DEBRETT,
OPPOSITE BURLINGTON-HOUSE, PICCADILLY.

MDCCXCII.

DA
804.1
.F6
B92

C O N T E N T S.

*INTRODUCTION, containing an Historical Sketch
of Liberty in Scotland.*

The Life of Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun p. 1—63

*Notes relating to the Family, and explanatory of the
Life of Fletcher* — — p. 65—69

*Speeches of Mr. Fletcher on the Question for the Set-
tlement of the Scottish Crown, delivered in the Scottish
Parliament, 1703* — — p. 71—174

*An Essay on the Genius, Character, and Writings of
James Thomson, the Poet: intended as a Basis for
writing properly the Life of that truly excellent Man:
with a poetical Address to the Shade of Thomson, by
David Stuart, Earl of Buchan* — p. 175—280

*An Elegy of Thomson's on the Death of his Mother:
from an Original, in the Poet's own Hand-writing, in
the Collection of the Earl of Buchan* — 187—190

Thomson's Elegy on the Death of Aikman, the Painter, from a MS. of the Author's own Hand-writing, in the Collection of the Earl of Buchan: with Notes by the Earl — — p. 190—193

A Song written by Thomson in his early Years; and afterwards shaped for his Amanda, from a MS. in the Collection of the Earl of Buchan — . p. 193

A poetical Address by Thomson to Dr. de la Cour in Ireland, on his Prospect of Poetry — p. 194

A Letter from Thomson to Mr. George Ross, from an Original in Lord Buchan's Collection p. 198—200

From the Same to the Same - p. 200—203

A Letter from Thomson to Mr. Eytzelton, afterwards Lord Lyttelton — — p. 203—205

A Letter from Thomson to his Sister, Mrs. Jean Thomson, at Lanark — — 206—213

A Letter from Thomson to Mr. Paterson, of the Leeward Islands — — p. 128—234

An

CONTENTS.

vii

An Ode on the Death of Thomson, by Mr. Collins.
The Scene on the Thames near Richmond p. 235—237

An Address to the Shade of Thomson, by the Rev.
Mr. William Thomson, sometime of Queen's College,
Oxford — — — p. 238

Anniversary of Thomson's Birth-day — p. 239

Mr. Burns, the Airshire Bard's Apology for not at-
tending the Anniversary Meeting; and his Address to
the Shade of Thomson — p. 244—248

The Earl of Buchan's Invitation to Sir John Sinclair,
of Ulbster, to be present at the Festival of Thomson
 p. 249—250

Eulogy of Thomson, the Poet, delivered by the Earl of
Buchan, on Ednam Hill, when he crowned the First
Edition of the Seasons with a wreath of Bays, on the
22d of September, 1791 — p. 251—260

A Letter from Thomson to the Sister of his Amanda,
at Bath — — — p. 260—266

A Hu

*A Humorous Epistle of Thomson's to a Friend on
his Travels* — — p. 267—273

*A Letter from Thomson to Mrs. R. the Sister of
Amanda* — — — p. 273—278

*A Poetical Paraphrase on the following Verse from
the Song of Solomon, "Turn away thine Eyes from me,
for they have overcome me"* — p. 277—278

Verses addressed to Miss Young p. 279—280

N. B. THE Four last Articles were received by
the Printer after all the others had gone to Press :
otherwise the Earl of Buchan's Eulogy on Thom-
son, according to a natural Arrangement, would
have been introduced in the Conclusion of this
Volume.

INTRODUCTION.

ALTHOUGH I am sensible that the very sound and fight of the word **LIBERTY** has become disagreeable, if not terrible, to the fashionable world in Britain; yet it is necessary that I should introduce the Memoirs of Fletcher and Thomson with reflections on the principles, manners, and temper, of the times and countries in which

B they

ii INTRODUCTION.

they lived, and of those that preceded their appearance. It is my purpose to treat this subject very briefly.

It naturally divides itself into three parts; the Gothic, Puritanical, and Philosophical ages: under which three heads, without once mentioning the formidable and proscribed vocable, I shall endeavour to make it clear and convincing to the meanest and most obdurate capacity, that political energy and sentiment were never wholly suppressed in my native country.

INTRODUCTION. iii

1st. Political energy and sentiment eminently appeared in the Gothic, by which I literally denominate that age which was coeval with the formation of military governments on a feudal basis, by the nations or people that over-ran Europe in ages far beyond the æra of genuine history, formed the states of Greece and Italy, and afterwards in a more barbarous state overspread and overpowered the Roman empire, which had sprung from the same original.

But the system of Gothic go-

B 2 vernment

iv INTRODUCTION.

vernment was permanent, and we have it accurately delineated by the masterly hand of Tacitus, in his Treatise on the Situation, Customs, and People of Germany.

In this æra, which is of immense duration, I observe political energy and sentiment exemplified every where in the equal rights of the holders of the soil.

In countries and ages where lands were cultivated by slaves taken in war, or brought into bondage by conquest, there could be no other citizens.

INTRODUCTION. v

Trade and manufactures were not.

In such a posture of society sciences and arts could not exist.

The proprietors of the soil could not protect themselves without government; and government requires a prince either single or complex, elective or hereditary.

Governments were therefore formed variously, as contingency or necessity occasioned or required.---Scotland, the country to which my subject directs me,

vi INTRODUCTION.

was planted and governed in this manner from the beginning.

The miserable natives who preceded the Goths or Scythians, were treated like the natives of North and South America by the Europeans; and, after skulking and scalping for ages in their fastnesses, must have at last yielded to necessity or reason in their obedience to the laws of the strongest.

In England, after the dereliction of the Roman provinces by the legions, the enervated slaves of imperial Rome became
an

INTRODUCTION. vii

an easy prey to every hardy invader. *Veni, vidi, vici*, is a boast no way honourable or peculiar to Cæsar.

The Saxons and Danes, to go no farther, exemplified the motto with a vengeance; and I shall allow the bastard of Normandy to have been a King William, and to have come over to save the miserable English from Dane-gelt, slavery, and arbitrary power.

Great and big books have been written to shew that English law and liberty are as old

viii INTRODUCTION.

as the country. I dislike big books, and leave Lord Lyttelton in possession of the field.

If constitutions of government could be justly held to admit of no radical amendments, according to the political gospel of Edmund, then the Gothic constitution was as perfect as possible.

But the rapid improvement of society soon rendered it odious, unjust, and ridiculous.

To overthrow it, however, there was no people; for the king and the slaves were, in fact,

INTRODUCTION. ix

fact, the only people, and the nobility was the prince.

The king, therefore, with the slaves, *assumed* the station of the people, and crushed more or less in different ages and countries *the prince*, combined and composed of the great proprietors of the soil.

This was accomplished by exciting and quelling impotent rebellions, by leaguings with the clergy, establishing free towns and corporations, and by encouraging trade and navigation.

James I. King of Scots,
was

II INTRODUCTION.

was far advanced in this plan when he was assassinated by the Earl of Athol. He had gone so far to form a popular government by encouraging the lesser barons and the boroughs of Scotland, and by the attainder of the great earls, that he used to joke with his Queen (the great grand-daughter of Edward III.) saying, "My dear, I hope the day is not far distant when I may have the pleasure of finding you in bed with all the nobility of Scotland!" a brave project for a patriot prince, and
worthy

INTRODUCTION. ❖

worthy of a more fortunate issue!

A rich and powerful nobility (alias an oligarchy) must soon destroy the liberties of any people among whom they are suffered to domineer.

It is necessary to explain what the King of Scots meant by *all the nobility of Scotland*.

They were the Earls and Lords of Regality.

Scotland never knew such a monstrous order of men as Lords of Parliament.

The Earls had no right to sit
in

xli INTRODUCTION.

in the Parliament but by their lands; but being chief magistrates and judges in their counties, with regal powers, these, with their territorial advantages springing from the feudal system, rendered them truly formidable both to the king and to the commonwealth.

James saw the advantages reaped in England by the crown, in consequence of the formation of a peers house of parliament, and the power of calling up great commoners by writ of summons to that house of parliament, and wished

INTRODUCTION. xlii

wished to adopt so crafty an example.

On the trial of Murdoch, Duke of Albany, he established a precedent for what were called Barons of Baron-rent, to be called Lords and Nobles, and to sit with precedence in the parliament by royal charter of lands, erecting estates into earldoms or baronies, unconnected with the ancient earldoms or county palatines of the kingdom; and, then, by the election of certain members of parliament, for preparing the laws

xiv INTRODUCTION.

laws or acts, who were called the Lords of the Articles, chosen from the earls, barons of baron-rent, and the great officers of the state, he contrived to quash or prevent motions that were adverse to the interest of the crown*.

I blush to repeat the A B C of the political history of Britain; but as I have not met with a short essence of it in any of our modern novels, I hope I may be excused, at least, by ladies and gentlemen who seldom turn over unwieldy vo-

* See Burnet's History of his Own Times.

lumes. Thus the creation of a tiers etat, or, of the weight of the people in the political balance, as is well observed in Captain Newte's admirable Tour in Scotland, was not the work of patriots, but of kings. In Sir William Wallace, the *Tell* of Scotland, we have a precious unique in the Gothic age of Scottish political energy and sentiment; and had Scotland belonged by hereditary claims to England or France, he would probably have engaged his countrymen to have formed a republic like the Swiss.

He

xvi INTRODUCTION:

He was envied and hated by the earls and great barons of Scotland; and by *their* treachery he fell a martyr to the independence and liberties of his country. It is in vain to search for the moral and rational principles of government in the military Gothic age: in those wretched times men had no civic union, no proper interchange of political sentiment. Fixed, or rather chained as they were to the soil of their masters, the people were without collision of sentiment; had no organized societies for
the

INTRODUCTION. xvii

the contemplation of common interests; no high roads, no posts, no printing-presses! What is man in such a situation, but the machine of regal or princely ambition and luxury!

II. I come now to consider the puritanical age of political energy and sentiment. Nothing could have been more fortunate for mankind, than the destruction of the degraded Greek empire by the Turks, so soon after the dissemination of the doctrines of Wickliffe, and the reformers of the church of Rome.

xviii INTRODUCTION.

It gave Europe philosophers, and teachers, and men of learning, Greek, and sense, and spirit.

Human genius and sentiment are always most agreeably excited by the contemplation of misfortunes. We naturally attach ourselves to the side of the loser of a contest. The struggles for liberty in Greece and Italy, recorded so eloquently by the Greek and Roman classics, imbued the minds of youth, and excited the feelings of the aged with the ardour of political sentiment. The people then began
to

INTRODUCTION. xix

to know truly what it is to be a member of a free commonwealth, to be a citizen: delightful name! best of inheritances, best of rights, not to be surrendered, but with the life that accompanies it! With these sublime and heart-engaging affections, the study of the Scriptures of Moses and the Evangelists in the living languages of Europe, and the consolation of free agency in the choice of religious opinions, remarkably contributed to the creation of new political energy among all ranks

xx . INTRODUCTION.

of men, but particularly among the middling and lower classes of the people, who by religious controverfy were made, as it were, artificial members of society, and felt the inexpressible and captivating delight of thinking and acting for themselves, and of touching and affecting general society.—The clergy, irritated to madness by the dissolution of their magic superstition, and looking forward to the total destruction of their profitable fable of the church, persecuted the thinking and reforming

ing people; and this laid the foundation of that perception of religious liberty, which immediately connected itself with political liberty in Scotland so early as the reign of James V. and in England towards the end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Buchanan arose in Scotland like the morning star, to announce the approach of philosophical day.

He was the father of whiggery *as a system* in Britain, if not in Europe; the Lord Bacon or Newton of political science and

xxii INTRODUCTION.

fentiment, by far the greatest man of his age, as Napier was of his country, in invention: in as much as political science is above all others in real importance, with respect to which we may fairly set down every other with an adjunct of a "*haud simile aut secundum.*" To women, some how or other, we have been indebted from the beginning for fortunate revolutions, saving in the case of Lady Adam, and even that is not carbonified by the strictest theologians.

To the beauty, gaiety, and
im-

INTRODUCTION. .xxiii

imprudence of Mary Stuart, the daughter of James V. we are indebted for the present state of Britain, such as it is. Had Mary been prudent, Scotland might have become a Popish monarchy. England at best would have been under its old monarchy (with proper address), under the Stuarts; and we should not have had occasion to deprecate Gallic freedom with the monstrous insanity of modern Englishmen; but to deplore the want of it.

It were needless and superfluous for me in this sketch to

xxiv INTRODUCTION.

delineate the minute progress of puritanical patriotism, from the deposition of Mary Queen of Scots, to that of her great grandson James the Seventh of Scotland, and Second of England.

In Scotland, even down to the period of the union of the kingdoms and parliaments, the people had no nerves for feeling political sentiment, save through the medium of religion or superstition.

Give Sawney his Sunday's minister to his liking, and he cared not who were ministers
of

INTRODUCTION. xxv

of state. Even during the long paper as well as cartridge war in the last century, we hear and see little in their acts or writings that favoured in the least of moral or political liberty. Every thing smelt of the scarlet lady of Rome. There were Scottish Hampdens, but no Sidneys. Buchanan and Fletcher alone were elevated above the ages in which they lived, and shed a lustre towards those that were to succeed, which will continue to shine more and more unto the perfect day. I glory in being the attire-
man

xxvi INTRODUCTION,

man of the characters of such *figurative princes*, and rejoice to think that even in that humble connection my name may be handed down to distant posterity! My ancestor Marr was a favourite pupil of Buchanan's, imbibed his science and principles, and handed them down to the race of the Stuart Erskines. I glory also, therefore, in paying this family tribute to that glorious pedagogue.

III. I proceed now with pleasure to the age of philosophical politics, which Thomson, my favourite

INTRODUCTION, xxvii

favourite bard, and the bard of liberty, saw before his death, like another prophet from Pisgah, saw and rejoiced !

The act of parliament which put an end to the heretable jurisdictions in Scotland, together with the wise and prudent administration of Archibald Duke of Argyl, and Lord Milton, gave Scotland a free avenue to political and civil exertion: the land was fallow, and cultivated by honest and active husbandmen, it presently bore abundant harvests. It would be invidious in
my

xxviii INTRODUCTION.

my own times to select names for enumeration and eulogy. They whom I have formerly named and celebrated will *not* be saved from oblivion by my feeble efforts. They would have lived without my encomium. Yet I arrogate to myself some degree of praise that I was taught, and that I learnt how to discriminate tinsel from gold. Hume, and Napier, and Fletcher, and Buchanan, and Thomson, will live for ever. Can I enough regret that Hume was a tory, and a foolish enthusiast in scepticism?

Yet

INTRODUCTION. xxix

Yet I will not attempt to touch his immortality ; *my* shafts would but rebound from *his* seven-fold shield. To the divine influence of the *printing-press* is the world indebted for the reign of philosophy ; and to philosophy it owes the principles of legislation.

It is with infinite regret that I cannot pretend to produce from Scotland, during this halcyon reign of philosophy, any great character since the death of Fletcher ; for Thomson was a retired man, and quite out of the walk of political eminence.

What

***** INTRODUCTION.**

What could be expected from a country, where the hereditary members of parliament were impotent, and fearfully questioned each other on the dissolution of a parliament, who were named to be of the sixteen representatives of the nobility of the country and nation? I beheld this infamous degradation of gentlemen, for I will not speak of noblemen, with disgust. I called upon the electors to rouse from their baneful lethargy; and they thought I was about to raise a third rebellion. Yet I persevered.

INTRODUCTION: xxxi

vered. By and by they began to leap the fold: they found their account in it; and they also persevered. But I will say no more about *them*: liberty, and Buchanan, and Fletcher, and Thomson, are better themes, or at least better suited to my humble genius.

I stop rather to enquire concerning the comparative state of Britain, in this philosophical age of political sentiment, with France and other countries, that have had inferior advantages.

Who but a clerk of the treasury,

xxxli INTRODUCTION.

fury, or a lord of the king's bed-chamber, can contemplate this parallel without regret?

It was in the last war of George II. that Great Britain laid herself under the necessity of defending her wide-extended dominion; and of asserting her claim to be the first nation upon earth. The contest was bloody and expensive, but the end was glorious—The enemy prostrate and breathless, empire extended, honour maintained, peace established, and, like the sun rising after a storm, a young and native

INTRODUCTION. xxxiii

tive monarch holding the sceptre, and ascending the throne, amidst the acclamations of the freest and happiest people on the globe.

These acclamations are heard no more. A system of corruption, established and digested early in this reign by a *baneful aristocracy*, has pervaded every rank and order of men, till the spirit of the constitution has fled, and left only the *caput mortuum* behind. The forms of our government have out-lasted the ends for which they were

D infi-

xxiv INTRODUCTION.

instituted, and have become a mere mockery of the people for whose benefit they should operate.

The prophecy of Montequieu is fulfilled; and nothing can save the country but the fulfilment of the prophecy of Franklin. What that prophecy was, what this prophecy is, I leave to the curious to learn. What I have written, I have written: futurity will determine the truth of my own particular predictions, and whether I am to be remembered as a captious
Cynic,

INTRODUCTION. xxxv

Cynic, or a wise and Pythonic politician.

To conclude: As I think it unnecessary to delineate the spirit of the times in Europe with respect to government, so I think it to be indispensably required at my hands, that I should, with respect to Scotland, deprecate the refusal of a militia to my country, the necessity for which was so eloquently set forth by my favourite Fletcher.

That I should mark with my blackest coal the game licence act, which is an insidious and

xxxvi INTRODUCTION.

dangerous disarming of the commons.

That I should express my utter detestation and abhorrence of the conduct of a first minister, who calling himself the minister of the crown, with a treasonable audacity should dare to advise the dissolution of a parliament, against the sense of a house of commons, the only legal organ of the voice of the people, let that house be ever so ill constructed, and demand ever so much reformation.

That

INTRODUCTION. xxxvii

That I should loudly protest, that a parliament ought to be allowed to die a natural death. And,

That if a parliament, contemplating the foreboding, the ominous imperfections of the constitution, should on its death-bed provide for a remedy by the equalization of the representation of the people, it would prevent the dangerous concussion which must undoubtedly arise, *and that quickly*, from their political franchises being brought to the level of fur-

xxxviii INTRODUCTION.

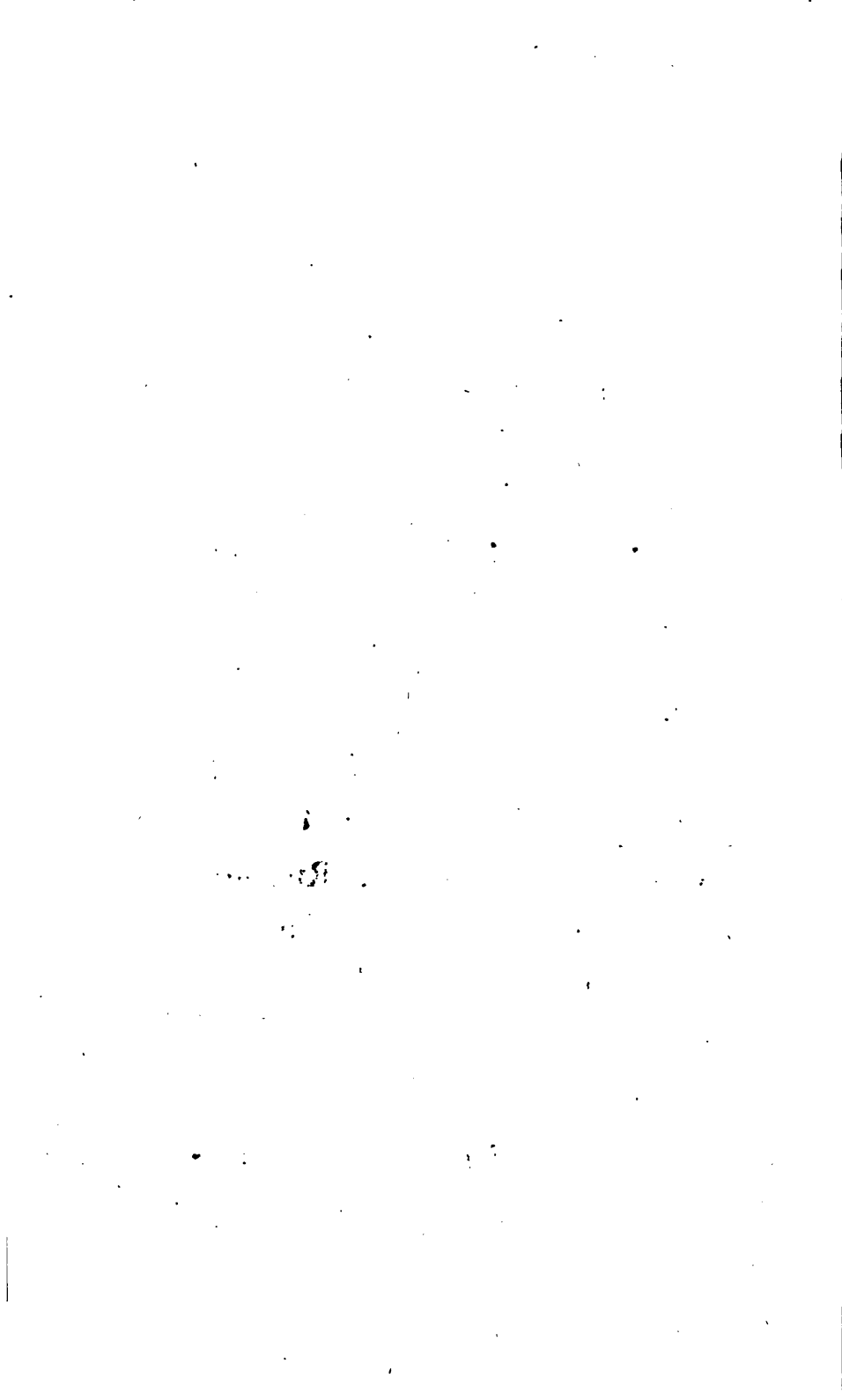
rounding nations with a violent jerk. Let us not (said my admirable preceptor and friend, Adam Smith, author of the Essay on the Wealth of Nations) rashly believe that Great Britain is capable of supporting any burden.

Let us consider what hold we have *now* of the two Indies, of Canada, and our other lucrative dependencies. A blow may be struck, a blow will be struck, that shall reach the vitals of public credit, and it is an event which nothing but poli-

INTRODUCTION. xxxix

political insanity can induce public ministers not to provide against. But no provision can be made against this event, except that which has been pointed out by the finger of the genius of Britain's welfare.

I will not offer incense to the living, but to the dead: I inscribe this and the following sheets to the memory of Sir **GEORGE SAVILE**, of **Rufford Hall**, Member of Parliament for the County of York.

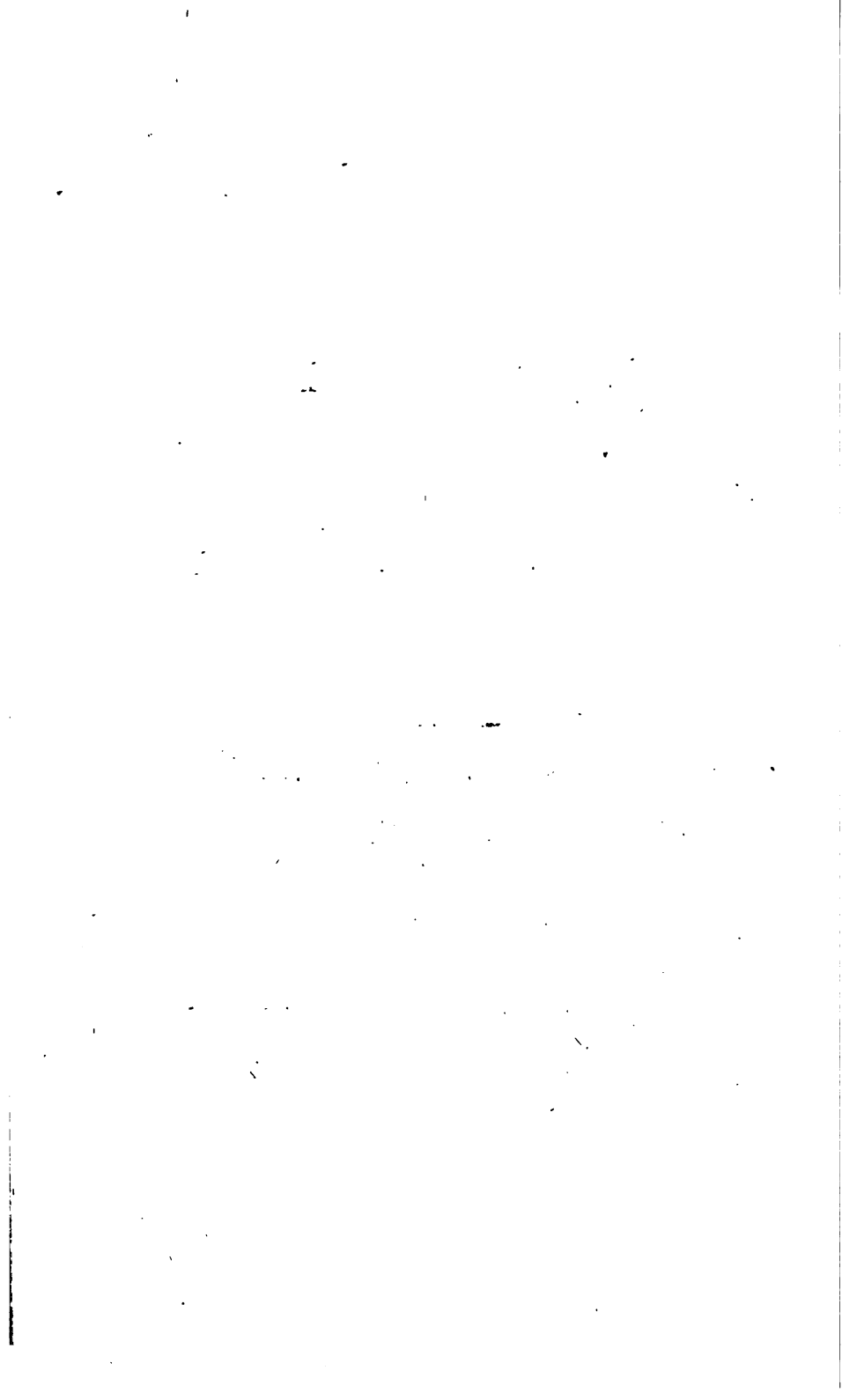


THE
L I F E
OF
ANDREW FLETCHER
OF SALTOUN.

Br D. S. EARL OF BUCHAN,

Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
Unshaken, uneduc'd, untterrify'd,
Nor number, nor example with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single.

PARADISE LOST, b. v.



THE
L I F E
O F
ANDREW FLETCHER
O F S A L T O U N .

WHEN I did myself the honour, with the assistance of the learned professor Minto, to offer to the public an account of the life, writings, and discoveries of the inventor of the logarithms, I pledged myself to attempt the biography of Fletcher of Saltoun, and of John Law of Laurieston: but when I set myself to the work, I found it much more difficult than I had imagined.

I confess

I confess that I am ambitious of permanent reputation, and loath to hazard even the little I may have obtained in promoting that of others, by obtruding on the world what might be brought forward by men of superior abilities. But, several years having elapsed without my having any prospect of being anticipated, I have yielded to the impulse of my esteem for the character of Fletcher.

I am afraid, however, that this monument which I endeavour to raise to the memory of my patriotic countryman may induce me to write too freely upon the subjects which excited my desire to perpetuate his name: but whether I may please or offend the present little world of the day, when I decently express the feelings of my heart, or the result of my reflections, it will give me little concern.

I am

I am the creature of a day, but not the creature of the times.

In politics I would be a Diogenes; and if patronised by the great Alexander of modern politics, whoever may affect that character, I should desire him, as my only request, that he would stand out of my light, that I might behold the beautiful fabric of a free constitution, undazzled by the splendour of power, and unintoxicated by the opinion of the people.

Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun was the son of Sir Robert Fletcher of Saltoun and Innerpeffer, by Catharine Bruce, daughter of Sir Henry Bruce of Clackmannan. By his paternal descent he was of a family truly honourable, and by his maternal, of the royal race of Bruce; the patriarch of the family of Clackmannan having been the third son of Robert de Bruce, lord of Annandale, grandfather of

Robert de Bruce, king of the Scots. His father was the fifth in lineal descent from Sir Bernard Fletcher of the county of York *. He married Catharine Bruce in the year 1651; and his eldest son Andrew, the subject of my enquiry, was born in the year 1653 †.

When he had the misfortune to lose his father, he was but in his early youth, and was destined by his father, on his death-bed, to the care of Dr. Burnet, rector of the parish of Saltoun, afterwards bishop of Salisbury, well known

* Sir Robert's father Andrew was one of the senators of the College of Justice in Scotland, by the style of Lord Innerpeffer. He was one of those seven truly magnanimous Scots who, with David Lord Cardross, protested against the delivery of King Charles I. at Newcastle, to the English Parliament. He died 1650.—MS. hist. of the family in my possession.

† MS. hist. ut supra,

by

by his political zeal and interesting writings. From Burnet he received, as might have been expected, a very pious and learned education, and was strongly imbued with erudition and the principles of a free government, which were congenial to the family of Fletcher, and espoused by his mother, and by those who had, with her, the charge of his nurture*.

When he had completed his course of elementary studies in Scotland, under the care of his excellent preceptor, he was sent to travel on the continent.

He was from his infancy of a very fiery and uncontrollable temper; but his dispositions were noble and generous †.

* MS. hift. ut supra.

† MS. hift. ut supra; from which, where not distinguished by other reference, I shall draw all my authorities.

He

He became first known as a public speaker and a man of political energy, being commissioner in the Scotch parliament for the shire of East Lothian, when the Duke of York was lord commissioner, connecting himself with the Earl of Argyll in opposition to the Duke of Lauderdale's administration, and the arbitrary designs of the court, which obliged him to retire first into England to consult with Dr. Burnet, and afterwards, by his advice, into Holland. He was summoned to appear before the Lords of the Council at Edinburgh, which he not thinking it prudent for him to do, he was outlawed, and his estate confiscated.

In the year 1683 he, with Robert Baillie of Jerviswood, came into England in order to concert measures with the friends of freedom in that country; and
they,

they, I believe, were the only Scotchmen who were admitted into the secrets of Lord Ruffel's Council of Six. They were likewise the only persons in whom the Earl of Argyll confided in Holland the common measures of the two countries, which were then concerted with much secrecy and danger, for the recovery of the constitution and liberties of the British kingdoms.

Fletcher managed his part of the negotiation with so much address and prudence, that Administration, though in no respect delicate as to the means of reaching the objects of their jealousy or resentment, could find no pretext for seizing him, nor could they fix upon him any of the articles of impeachment for which Mr. Baillie of Jerviswood was condemned and suffered capital punishment. Mr.

Baillie was offered his pardon on condition of impeaching his friend Fletcher; but he persisted to the gallows in rejecting the proposal with indignation. O noble, excellent, and truly worthy Scot! May your descendants and your countrymen ever remember and imitate your example!

On Fletcher's return to the continent, finding no prospect of his safe return to Britain, he dedicated his leisure to foreign travel, and to the study of public law and politics; during which period of his life I have fruitlessly sought for letters that might not only have traced him in his various situations, but furnished agreeable and useful materials for his biography.

In the beginning of the year 1685 Fletcher came to the Hague, to assist at the deliberations of the exiles from Britain, and particularly with those of his

own country, with a view to promote the cause of opposition to the arbitrary measures of James II : but it does not appear that he possessed much of the confidence of the party. He was unaccommodating, and ran extravagantly on the project of setting up a commonwealth in Scotland, or at least a monarchy so limited as hardly to bear any resemblance to a kingdom. His soul was fired with the recollection of the great spirits that had been raised by the Greek republics, and, like all men of great abilities, he wished for that state of things which might mark the superiority of his own talents, and give full exercise to his popular powers. Argyll's expedition concerted at that time with Monmouth and the party was the most inviting to Fletcher ; but being dissatisfied with the plan of operations, and

his countrymen, who enjoyed Monmouth's confidence, he went with the Duke, who was the dupe of the ambitious and crafty Prince of Orange*.

Burnet,

* The ambitious and crafty Prince of Orange.] It is with reluctance that I affix such epithets to a prince who seems to be, as it were, the idol of whigs, who, in hyperbolising the immortal memory of Old Glorious, seem to forget that he was a man, and a politician. My grandfather and great-grandfather came over with him at the Revolution; and I know that I am not without partiality to a character connected with the establishment of what we call the Constitution of the country, and with the illustration of my own family: but I cannot be blind to his faults, nor do I think it would be conducive to the establishment of a real constitution of freedom in the British nation, that such blindness should continue among the people who wish to arrange themselves under the banners of British liberty. That he was ambitious in the disagreeable application

cation

Burnet, in the History of his Own Times; informs us that Fletcher had told him,

cation of that epithet appears from his lulling the flumbers of royal security in England, when he was fanning the flames of insurrection against his father-in-law in Holland: from his encouraging the mad project of Monmouth to get him out of the way to the throne, while he was giving good advice to James that the invasion might be defeated. That he was craftily ambitious, appears not only from this double plot, but from his forcing his way to the throne, instead of accepting the regency, by intimidating the chiefs who had invited him over, with a threat of returning to Holland, and leaving them in the hands of an enraged bigoted monarch. That he was ambitious, crafty, and machiavelian, appears from his having given instructions *to take care of* King James, if he should remain at Rochester, and not be disposed to leave the kingdom. Of the wretched device to shake the confidence of the people with respect to the Queen's pregnancy, and the Prince of Wales's birth, I shall say nothing. It

him, that Monmouth, though a weak young man, was sensible of the imprudence of his adventure, and hesitated till he was urged by the party, most of whom were certainly in concert with the Prince of Orange, and considered him as the only probable instrument for dethron-

is the disgrace of the party, and ought to be buried, if possible, in oblivion. It is a dangerous as well as a wicked thing for a prince to take such methods of insuring success, as William himself afterwards found, by the intrigues of the Princess Sophia to turn him out: the proofs of which intrigues King William tied up together in a bundle, which was found in his cabinet. They were seen in Lord Rochford's hands while secretary of state, were afterwards in other hands that need not be mentioned, and were probably treated as heretics were formerly, and as republicans are now wished to be by some other kings. The bundle was docketted by William's own hand—" *Letters of the Princess Sophia to turn me out.*"

ing

ing the king, and supplanting William in his views, if the attempt were delayed till the English nation should become desperate enough to overlook the doubts that Charles II. had confirmed by his declaration in council of the legitimacy of the Duke of Monmouth*. So well was this plot laid, that few of the party in Holland joined in these expeditions, but waited either in or out of the secret, till they should see the effects of the explosion that was to bury poor Monmouth under its

* Those men urged him on to war and danger, by an appeal to his personal courage. They wished in this manner to remove a dangerous rival out of the way of the prince's ambition; well-knowing that if the people of England should become desperate, they might be induced to overlook the doubts of Monmouth's legitimacy, which had been confirmed by the public declaration of Charles II.

ruins. But Fletcher of Saltoun had neither coolness nor sufficient political subtlety to conduct himself with a view to his own private emolument. Fired by the hopes of a revolution that, from the insignificance of Monmouth, and the circumstances of his birth, might produce a constitution of government in which his republican talents might have full scope, he at first fell in warmly with the scheme of Monmouth's landing; but afterwards, suspecting probably the intrigue of the Prince of Orange, he wished it to be laid aside. He told Bishop Burnet (which supports this conjecture), that Monmouth was pushed on to it against his own sense and reason, and was picqued upon the point of honour in hazarding his person with his friends. Monmouth landed at Lyme in Dorsetshire. Soon after their landing,

Lord Grey was sent with a small party to disperse a few of the militia, and ran for it; but his men stood, and the militia retreated. Lord Grey brought back a false report, which was soon contradicted by the men, whom their leader had abandoned, coming back to quarters in good order. The unfortunate Duke of Monmouth was struck with this (says Burnet), when he found that the person on whom he depended most, and for whom he designed the command of the cavalry, had already made himself infamous by his cowardice. He intended to join Fletcher with him in that command*: but Fletcher having been sent out on another party, engaged in a scuffle, in which he had the misfortune to kill the mayor of

* Burnet.

Lynn against the laws of war, in the sudden heat of passion, on account of contumelious language used to him by the mayor, on reclaiming a horse of his that had been impressed by Fletcher's party. This unguarded, unsoldierly, and unjustifiable act of violence, must have rendered his future services on the expedition of little consideration to Monmouth; but it was not the cause of his leaving the little army. The account given by Fletcher himself of his general conduct at this time to the late Earl Marshall of Scotland, was, that he had been induced to join the Duke of Monmouth, on the principles of the Duke's manifestoes in England and Scotland, particularly by the laws promised for the permanent security of civil and political liberty, and of the protestant religion, and the calling of a general congress

gress of delegates from the people at large, to form a free constitution of government, and not to pretend to the throne upon any claim, except the free choice of the representatives of the people. That, when Monmouth was proclaimed king at Taunton, he saw his deception, and resolved to proceed no farther in his engagements, which he considered from that moment as treason against the just rights of the nation, and treachery on the part of Monmouth. That, finding himself therefore no longer capable of being useful, he left Taunton, and embarked on board a vessel for Spain. That soon after his landing he was committed to prison; and, on the application of the English minister at Madrid, he was ordered to be delivered up, and transmitted to London in a Spanish vessel, which was named for that purpose.

That

That one morning, as he was looking pensively through the bar of his dungeon, he was accosted by a venerable person, who made sign to speak to him: Fletcher, looking if any passage could be found for his escape, discovered a door open, at which he was met by his deliverer, with whom he passed unmolested through three guards of foldiers, who were fast asleep; and, without being permitted to return thanks to his guide, he prosecuted his escape with the aid of a person who seemed to have been sent for that purpose, concerning whom he never could obtain any information. That disguised he proceeded in safety through Spain, where, when he found himself out of all apparent danger, he lingered, and amused himself with the view of the country, and with study in the conventual libraries; and having privately

yately obtained credit by bills upon Amsterdam, he bought many rare and curious books, some of which are preserved in the library at Saltoun, in the county of Haddington. That he had made several very narrow escapes of being detected and seized in the course of his peregrinations through Spain, particularly in the neighbourhood of a town (the name of which Lord Marhall had forgotten), where he intended to have passed the night; but in the skirts of a wood a few miles distant from thence, upon entering a road to the right, he was warned by a woman of a very respectable appearance, to take the left-hand road, as there would be danger in the other direction. Upon his arrival he found the citizens alarmed by the news of a robbery and murder on the road against which he had been cautioned. Some time after this
escape,

escape, Fletcher's active genius led him to serve as a volunteer in the Hungarian war*, where he distinguished himself by his gallantry and military talents. But the glory which he might have acquired in arms, had he served long enough to have obtained a command, he cheerfully sacrificed to the safety of his country.

Persuaded that the liberties of Britain, if not of all Europe, hung upon the issue of the design then in contemplation at the Hague for a revolution in England, and having learned that it had already attained a considerable degree of maturity, he hastened to Holland, and joined himself to the groupe of his countrymen who were attached to the interests of the Prince of Orange, most of whom were refugees from England or Scotland. Lord Stair,

* MS. ut supra.

LORD Melville, Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth, Lord Cardross, Sir Robert Steuart of Coltness, Dr. Burnet, Mr. James Stuart, afterwards lord advocate of Scotland, and Mr. Cunningham, the editor of Horace, and author of a Latin History of Great Britain, which has been lately translated by Dr. W. Thomson, continuator of principal Watson's History of Spain, and author of several Philosophical Romances, &c. &c. and published by Dr. Hollingberry, one of the present king's chaplains, were the Scots with whom he was in the greatest habits of intimacy *. With these gentlemen Fletcher

* Though I hold in sovereign contempt the insignificance of modern anecdote, I shall set down in this place some particulars relating to these men, that are characteristic of their times and histories, that may not be unacceptable to the public. Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth, grandfather of the present

cher associated; but his political principles were too high and refined, and his sentiments

sent Earl of Marchmont, from his first appearance in the Scotch parliament, in the year 1665, as member for the county of Berwick, had distinguished himself by a noble zeal for the liberties of his country. He was the ablest man of the party in opposition to the administration of the worthless Lauderdale; and in the year 1675, when, according to the despotic system of that scandalous engine of the court, the Scotch privy council, the houses of persons disagreeable to administration were made barracks for the troops, he had the spirit to bring a complaint into the courts of justice with respect to the garrisoning the house of Blaise in Berwickshire; for the exercise of which right he was brought before the privy council, who declared him incapable of all public trust, committing him prisoner to the common tolbooth or jail of Edinburgh, where he underwent a long and tedious imprisonment, from whence, upon petition on account of sickness, he was conveyed to the castle of Dunbarton, and afterwards to Stirling castle,

ments were too Roman, or rather, as I
may now say, too Gallic, and too much
in

castle, where he remained some years. When liberated, he retired into England, where being in strict habits of friendship with the friends of liberty, and particularly with Lord Ruffel, he found it necessary for him to go abroad on the breaking out of the Rye-house plot, and lived some time at Geneva, from whence he went to the Hague, to concert with his fellow-sufferers the measures that were followed by the expeditions of Monmouth and Argyll, with the latter of whom he came over, and narrowly escaped being taken after the defeat of Argyll's forces, taking shelter and lying in concealment in the house of the Laird of Langshaw, and afterwards in the aisle of the church of Polwarth, the burial-place of his family. All his food was brought to him in the night time by his eldest daughter, then only twelve years old. This place of concealment having been discovered, a party was sent to apprehend him. As the soldiers passed near a gentleman's

in the odour of philosophical politics, to
 accept of the privilege granted by James
 the

man's house in the neighbourhood, who was friendly to Sir Patrick, and to liberty, they were invited by him, who knew their errand, to carouse on his ale and best cheer; while he, aware of the danger of writing, immediately sent a feather inclosed in a bit of paper, as a symbol of flight, to Sir Patrick in the aisle at Polwarth; who, presently interpreting the figure, took horse, and fortunately escaped and fled into Holland, where he remained under the feigned name of Brown, till he came over with the Prince of Orange at the Revolution.

Sir Patrick was born on the 13th of January 1641; appointed lord chancellor of Scotland May 2d, 1696; lord high commissioner, or lord lieutenant of Scotland, 1702. He died at Berwick on the 1st of August 1724, in the 84th year of his age, highly respected for his attachment to the liberties of his country, for his virtue, religion, and learning. His son and heir Alexander, Earl of Marchmont, after
 a series

the Second's act of indemnity to return to his country and estate, when under the dominion

a series of political situations, not coming as one does now-a-days from being a school-boy to be a prime minister, was our ambassador at the congress of Cambray in the year 1721; and his son Hugh, now Earl of Marchmont, made a brilliant figure in the House of Commons in opposition to the corrupt administration of Sir Robert Walpole, and was afterwards an useful member of the House of Peers, yet most of all distinguished by his learning, and by having been the friend of Pope, Swift, Atterbury, and Arbuthnot. Party politics in England cannot secure permanent fame; and I rejoice to think that my old good friend, the friend of my father and grandfather, has secured his immortality by literature.

In his philosophic retreat at Hemel Hempstead, he may perhaps deign to be flattered with my hereditary regard.

Henry Lord Cardross, the son of David Lord Cardross of Dryburgh, &c. who protested against

dominion of disguised despotism, sanctified by a venal parliament: so that
when

the delivering up of King Charles I. at Newcastle, had been trained, in the manner of his family, in the exalted principles of religion, liberty, and learning; and early joined himself to the opposers of the Duke of Lauderdale's administration. For his lady's hearing her own chaplain preach in her own house, he was fined in five thousand pounds, of which he paid a thousand; and, after many months attendance at court for procuring a discharge of the overplus of his fine, was finally imprisoned in the castle of Edinburgh, where he continued four years; while his house of Cardross in Perthshire, immediately after it had been repaired, and furnished at a great expence, was garrisoned to his great loss and vexation. And in June 1679, the king's forces, in their march to the west (the day before the Duke of Buccleugh came to them), wheeled and went about two miles out of the road, that they might quarter on Lord Cardross's estates of Kirkhall and Uphall, in West Lothian.

After-

when Argyll, Sutherland, Melville, and others had recovered their inheritances
in

Afterwards, having obtained his liberation, he went to North America, and established a colony in Carolina, which was destroyed by the Spaniards. He returned, broken but not dispirited by misfortunes, to Europe, and attached himself to the friends of liberty in Holland. He raised a regiment of dragoons, on the Revolution, and was an useful commander under M'Kay in Scotland, in subduing the remains of opposition there to the new government; but died of the effects of his sufferings, in the year 1693, in the 43d year of his age.—Concerning Sir Robert Steuart of Coltness, there is an anecdote so historically curious, that I cannot pass him over without notice, though he was a person of no extraordinary eminence. In the end of the year 1686, when the business of the Test was in agitation, William Penn was employed at the court of the Prince of Orange, to reconcile the Stadtholder to the views of his father-in-law. Penn became acquainted with most

in the year 1686, he chose rather to remain in exile than to accept of liberty

as

of the Scotch fugitives, and, among the rest, with Sir Robert Steuart, and his brother James, who wrote the famous Answer to Fagel's Memorial, and will be mentioned more particularly hereafter; and finding that the violence of their zeal reached little farther than the enjoyment of their religious liberty, on his return to London he advised the measure of an indemnity and recal to the persecuted Presbyterians, who had not been engaged in treasonable acts of opposition to the civil government. Sir Thomas availed himself of this indemnity to return to his own country; but found his estate and only means of subsistence in the possession of the Earl of Arran, afterwards Duke of Hamilton. Soon after his coming to London he met Penn, who congratulated him on his being just about to feel experimentally the pleasure so beautifully expressed by Horace, of the "*Mihi me reddentis agelli.*" Coltness sighed, and said, "Ah, Mr. Penn! Arran has got
my

as a royal favour! Yet Alexander Cunningham, the historian, though a Whig
and

my estate, and I fear my situation is about to be now worse than ever." "What do you say, Gospel?" (a name Coltness had got at the Hague :) "You surprise and grieve me exceedingly. Come to my house tomorrow, and I will set matters to rights for thee."

Penn went immediately to Arran. "What is this, friend James," said he to him, "that I hear of thee? Thou hast taken possession of Coltness's estate; thou knowest that it is not thine." "That estate," replied Arran, "I paid a great price for. I received no other reward for my expensive and troublesome embassy in France except this estate; and I am certainly much out of pocket by the bargain."

"All very well, friend James," said the Quaker; "but of this assure thyself, that if thou dost not give me this moment an order on thy chamberlain for two hundred pounds to Coltness, to carry him down to his native country, and a hundred a year to subsist on till matters are adjusted, I will make it as

and friend of Fletcher, mentions this conduct of Fletcher's as extravagant. It was reserved for this age of wonders to exhibit the true principles of political sentiment, unconnected with superstition and personal attachment to kings or to parties.

Fletcher made a manly, noble appear-

many thousands out of thy way with the king." Arran instantly complied, and Penn sent for Sir Robert, and gave him the security. After the Revolution, Sir Thomas, with the rest, had full restitution of his estate, and Arran was obliged to account for all the rents he had received; against which this payment only was allowed to be stated.—This authentic particular I received from my illustrious uncle, the late Sir James Steuart Denham, father of the present worthy member for Clydesdale. It strongly marks the keenness of King James to facilitate his foolish measures in favour of his religion and arbitrary power.

ance

ance in that convention which met in Scotland, after the Revolution, for the settlement of the new government. In Scotland the rights and liberties of the people had been determined and fixed by multiplied instances of changing the order of succession, and attainting their sovereigns for treason against the rights of the people: and it is to Scotland and a Scotchman that the world is indebted for the establishment of the philosophical and logical principles of a free constitution both in theory and practice. George Buchanan, the greatest man of his age, as well as country, established, by irrefragable arguments, in his treatise or dialogue concerning the rights of the people of Scotland, the rights of all mankind; was the father of whiggery, and, what is much grander, the father of that system which

which will one day verify the prophecies of the Christian Scriptures, to the abasement of kings, and the destruction of priestcraft.

Raymond de Sebonde in France, the friend of Montaigne, adopted the principles of Buchanan in his *Lettre sur la Servitude Volontaire*, a beautiful little piece published by his friend, which being universally read with the *Essays* of Montaigne, kept up the sacred fire of freedom in France, in the midst of folly and despotism, till the progress of commerce, printing, philosophy, and literature opened the eyes of Frenchmen every where to discover that they were men, and ought to be citizens; that men were not born with *gold chains* about their necks, with stars upon their breasts, or coronets upon their heads; that it is of the nature of kings
as

as hitherto constituted, to consider their interests as separate from their nations, and to watch continually like wolves or foxes for their prey, in order to destroy the citizens committed to their charge; that it is necessary, therefore, that they should have only the power of obeying the laws made by the people, with that of doing good; but that the power of doing mischief, either by prerogative or *influence*, ought to be taken away. These were the principles of Fletcher, principles that seemed extravagant, disloyal, and impracticable in his days; but which are now acknowledged almost every where, except in Spain, Germany, and England. These have ever been the principles of his biographer: but he will not stoop to examine the ravings of a sublime and beautiful

beautiful apologist for tyranny and superstition.

“ A fairer person lost not heaven ; he seem'd
 For dignity compos'd, and high exploit :
 But all was false and hollow ; though his tongue
 Dropp'd manna, and could make the worse appear
 The better reason, to perplex and dash
 Maturest counsels.”

A man formed like Cicero for finging like a nightingale in a cage, to be kept for the gratification of luxurious patricians, now the friend of Pompey, and now of Cæsar, as it suited the indulgence of his inordinate vanity ; fond of words like a school-master, and fond of trappings like a filly little girl let out of a boarding-school. I would indulge him with a copy of verses of my own composition, written in the style of a madrigal upon my mistress's eye-brow.

“ Mould'ring

"Mould'ring and frail, to dust the body tends,
 And human greatness stubborn fortune bends :
 Fleeting and vain the storied urns arise,
 And like a cloud the human vapour flies.
 Vain are our busts and portraits to retain
 The soul's bright form, and light the lamp again :
 By life alone the mimic form revives,
 A Tully dead, a Tully yet survives ;
 Mortal by nature, endless in the kind,
 Successive ages shew the kindred mind."

Fletcher used to say with Cromwell
 and Milton, that the trappings of a mo-
 narchy and a great aristocracy would
 patch up a very clever little common-
 wealth. Being in company one day with
 the witty Dr. Pitcairn, the conversation
 turned on a person of learning whose
 history was not distinctly known. "I knew
 the man well," said Fletcher: "he was here-
 ditary professor of divinity at Hamburgh."
 "*Hereditary* professor!" said Pitcairn, with
 a laugh

38. LIFE OF ANDREW FLETCHER.

a laugh of astonishment and derision.

"Yes, Doctor," replied Fletcher, "hereditary professor of divinity. What think you of a hereditary king?"

Having said so much upon the principles of Fletcher, I think it proper at this juncture of political reform in Europe, that I should guard my own expressed opinions against popular misinterpretation on a subject of such great importance to the happiness of my country.

I have ever thought it was a misfortune to Britain that the Revolution was followed by so imperfect a system of political arrangement, and that it would have been more conducive to the future happiness of the nation, if we had had to erect an entire new fabric of a constitution in the present improved state of society, than to clear out, patch, and buttress the edifice,

as has been partially done by the Convention Parliament in the year 1689, by the Bill of Rights, by the Act of Succession, by the Treaty of Union, by the abolition of heritable jurisdictions and feudal tenures, of personal slavery, the confirmation and extension of the act of Habeas Corpus, the security of the liberty of speech and writing, and of printing, the securing private property against the claims and nullum tempus of the crown, the abridgment of the powers of the ecclesiastical courts, the abolition of personal slavery in Britain, the independency of the salaries of the criminal and civil judges and magistrates, by the Grenvillian law of elections, the exclusion of tax-gatherers from the right of popular suffrage in elections of members of parliament, and finally by the declaration of
the

the rights of juries, as judges both of the law and of the fact.

But as things are now situated, Britain must be satisfied to fall at least a century behind all other nations, that, like America and France, have had the advantage of erecting a constitution from the first foundations of jurisprudence, and of escaping the dangers that arise from dilapidation.

Had I a crazy old family mansion, I should have been better pleased that my fathers had left me the task of erecting a new one, which I might have done cheaper and better than patching the old; but having the mansion, I should consider well before I pulled it to the ground. The constitution of England, Scotland, and Ireland admits of a great and a safe improvement, which will be soon demanded and obtained by the people, the
equalization

equalization of the rights of election, and the abolition of the rights of primogeniture in private succession. But I would warn my countrymen against every approach to hasty determination upon the methods of repairing the old house, lest it should tumble about their ears.

When the fanatics, in the year 1567, came to pull down the cathedral of Glasgow, a gardener who stood by, said, "My friends, cannot you make it a house for serving your God in your own way? For it would cost your country a great deal to build such another." The fanatics desisted, and it is the only cathedral in Scotland, that remains entire and fit for service. Such, therefore, with respect to the British constitution, is the advice of the gardener of Dryburgh Abbey. I reject the uniform as I do the principles

ent motives. Lockhart of Carnwath, the memoir writer, flattered himself that Fletcher was a Tory, if not a Jacobite, in his heart, because he associated with Tories and Jacobites: but he did not reflect that the Tories and Jacobites were then the country party, and that Fletcher would hear more from them of the dignity, independence, and interest of his country, and less about a king that inspires a republican with no sentiment but terror or dislike. This, I believe, was the foundation for his being suspected *of not being a true Whig at bottom*; for Whigs and Tories were in those days quite distinct, disliking and avoiding each other, not mingled together as they now are, to share among themselves the plunder of their country.

From the most minute examination
of

of the records and memoirs of the times, it sufficiently appears, that while others, whether Whigs or Tories, were endeavouring to turn the Revolution in Britain to the promoting of their own selfish purposes, Fletcher neither asked nor obtained any emolument from the court; but that he was continually attentive to the interest and honour of Scotland.

When an attempt was made, in the year 1692, to bring about a counter-revolution, Fletcher's ruling principle (though dissatisfied with King William) was the good of his country. He used all his influence with the Duke of Hamilton to forget the causes of his disgust, and to co-operate with the friends of a free constitution *.

* Vide Fletcher's Letter to the Duke. Dalrymple's Memoirs.

In every proposal for the happiness and glory of his country, Fletcher was interested as if it tended to his own personal emolument and reputation. He was the first friend and patron of that extraordinary man Paterfon, the projector of the Darien Company; to whose merits my kinsman Sir John Dalrymple has done the justice they deserve, in the last volume of his interesting *Memoirs of Great Britain*, which, unable as I am to describe with equal spirit and ability the share Fletcher had in this business, I shall give in Sir John's own words.

“ Ingenious men draw to each other like iron and the loadstone : Paterfon, on his return to London, formed a friendship with Mr. Fletcher of Saltoun, whose mind was inflamed with the love of pub-

lic good, and all of whose ideas to procure it had a sublimity in them. Fletcher disliked England merely because he loved Scotland to excess; and therefore the report common in Scotland is probably true, that he was the person who persuaded Paterfon to trust the fate of his project to his own countrymen alone, and to let them have the sole benefit, glory, and danger in it; for in its danger Fletcher deemed some of its glory to consist. Although Fletcher had nothing to hope for, and nothing to fear, because he had a good estate, and no children; and though he was of the country party; yet in all his schemes for the public good, he was in use to go as readily to the king's ministers as to his own friends, being indifferent who had the honour of doing

good, provided it was done. His house of Saltoun in East Lothian was near to that of the Marquis of Tweeddale, then minister for Scotland; and they were often together. Fletcher brought Paterfon down to Scotland with him, presented him to the Marquis, and then, with that power which a vehement spirit always possesses over a diffident one, persuaded the Marquis, by arguments of public good, and of the honour which would redound to his administration, to adopt the project. Lord Stair and Mr. Johnston, the two secretaries of state, patronised those abilities in Paterfon which they possessed in themselves; and the lord advocate, Sir James Steuart, the same man who had adjusted the Prince of Orange's declaration at the Revolution, whose son was
married

married to a niece of Lord Stair*, went naturally along with his connections."

FROM this busy period till the meeting of the Union Parliament, Fletcher

* Anne Dalrymple, daughter of Sir Hugh Dalrymple, lord president of the Court of Session, was married to Sir James Steuart of Goodtrees, baronet, solicitor general for Scotland, and by him was the mother of the late learned and truly eminent Sir James Steuart Denham, author of the *Principles of Political Oeconomy*; and four daughters, the second of whom, Agnes, of elegant taste and genius, was the mother of all my father's children, some of whom inherit her abilities, the strong natural parts and probity of the father, with the taste and brilliant imagination of the mother. "Fortes creantur fortibus & bonis." If this compliment to my brothers shall appear too strong, and be blamed, I look for the reward of Proculus:—"Notus in fratres animi paterni."

was uniform and indefatigable in his parliamentary conduct, continually attentive to the rights of the people, and *jealous, as every friend to his country ought to be, of their invasion by the king and his ministers ; for it is as much of the nature of kings and ministers to invade and destroy the rights of the people, as it is of foxes and weasels to rife a poultry yard, and destroy the poultry.*—All of them therefore ought to be muzzled.

Fletcher was accordingly a strenuous but unsuccessful advocate for a national militia. His discourse on that important subject written at this time, was not printed until the year 1698. In this Discourse he says, what I wish I had a voice loud enough to be heard over all Britain and Ireland, to rattle in the ears of the people—"A good and effective militia is of
such

such importance to a nation, that it is the chief part of the constitution of any free government. For though, as to other things, the constitution be ever so slight, a good militia will always preserve the public liberty. But in the best constitution that ever was, as to all other parts of government, if the militia be not upon a right foot, the liberty of that people must perish.

“The Swifs,” says he, “at this day are the freest, happiest, and the people of all Europe who can best defend themselves, because they have the best militia.”

What a reproach to the nobility, the gentry, and to the people of Scotland, is it not, that, attending to the dirty consideration of pleasing a sub-minister of Scotland,

land, they should have lately flinched from forcing the British legislature to make them free citizens, and to enjoy the free use of arms in defence of their own constitution !

—————Pudet hæc opprobria nobis,

Et dici potuisse, & non potuisse refelli !

In the year 1703 we find Fletcher great in the debates concerning the fixing the succession to the crown of Scotland, in the event of Queen Anne's dying without issue; which he strenuously and successfully urged the parliament to determine before they should think of granting any supplies to the crown. It was even resolved, that the successor to the crown after Queen Anne, should not be the same person that was King or Queen of England, *unless the just rights of Scotland* should be declared in parliament at London,

don, and fully settled independent of English interests and councils; and what is remarkable, that wise and excellent, but seemingly very strong rule of the French constitution, that the king or queen should *not* have the power of engaging the nation in war without the consent of parliament, was determined upon by the parliament of Scotland; in the support and preparation of which law, and others for the security of Scottish freedom, Mr. Fletcher had a considerable share, and had great influence by the power of his fervent and manly eloquence. "Prejudice and opinion," said he, "govern the world, to the great distress and ruin of mankind; and though we daily find men so rational as to charm by the disinterested rectitude of their sentiments in all other things, yet, when we touch upon any wrong opinion of theirs

with

54 LIFE OF ANDREW FLETCHER.

with which they have been early prepossessed, we find them more irrational than any thing in nature, and not only not to be convinced, but obstinately resolved not to hear any reason against it. These prejudices are yet stronger when they are taken up by great numbers of men, who confirm each other through the course of several generations, and seem to have their blood tainted, or, to speak more properly, their animal spirits influenced by them. Of these delusions, one of the strongest and most pernicious has been a violent inclination in many men to extend the prerogative of the prince to an absolute and unlimited power. And though, in limited monarchies all good men profess and declare themselves enemies to all tyrannical practices, yet many even of these are found ready to oppose
such

such necessary limitations as might secure them from the tyrannical exercise of power in a prince, not only subject to all the infirmities of other men, but, by the temptations arising from his power, to far greater. This *humour** has increased greatly in the Scottish nation, since the union of the crowns in 1603; and the slavish submissions, which have been made necessary to procure the favours of the court, have cherished and fomented a slavish principle. I must put the representatives of the Scots in mind, that no such principles were known in this kingdom before the union of the crowns, *and that no monarchy in Europe was more limited, nor any*

* *Humeur*, Scoto-Gallic, fancy, whim: An oppressed people can never know what the English exhibited of humour *when they were free*.

people more jealous of liberty than the Scots *."

Fletcher

* I David Stewart, Earl of Buchan, do throw this gauntlet of Fletcher's down, in the presence of all England; and if any man shall take it up, I will try my strength with him; but I will not argue with women or priests, till I shall see them leaving their trenches of petticoats and superstition, and meeting me on the fair and manly field of historical knowledge.

Hume told the people of England the truth about their old constitution, and they called him a Tory. I tell them that Hume was in the right, and I defy them to call *me* a Tory. It was no rarity for the Scots to dethrone a King for attacking the liberties of the people. They dismissed Baliol because he sold his country; they dismissed Mary because she meant to govern them like the France of the Guises; they brought in Bruce as the Prince of Orange of Scotland; and for the principles and practice I refer to Buchanan's Dialogue de Jure Regni apud Scotos.

There

Fletcher was by far the most nervous and correct speaker in the parliament of
Scotland,

There never was such a thing as a peer of Scotland. There were earls indeed, but they did not sit in parliament in right of their earldoms, but in right of their lands; and there they were only on a par with other proprietors of fiefs. James I. of the Scots indeed attempted to introduce the English modes, and was murdered, like Cæsar, by his kinsman; and James VI. by the statute 1587, introduced the practice of the election of representatives for the freeholders; but the nobility, as they were called, *not the peerage* of Scotland, were no more than the barons or freeholders, barons of baron-rent, who by usage retained their privilege of sitting in parliament in right of their lands, which if they sold, they lost their right of sitting, along with their possessions.

There was but one house of parliament: and in this, unfortunately for Scotland, the priests had a privilege to sit in right of their lands. But the Scots had no notion of such a monstrous organ of power for their king, as a separate house for his servants

Scotland, for he drew his style from the pure models of antiquity, and not from the grosser practical oratory of his contemporaries; so that his speeches and his language will bear a comparison with the best speeches of the reign of Queen Anne, the Augustan age of Great Britain, far superior to the meretricious, inflated, metaphorical style of our modern orators; from which remark I must set down Mr. Charles Fox, member for Westminster in the present parliament, as a wonderful exception. In many respects Fox re-

and chaplains, to stop the progress of laws in favour of the rights of the people, before they should come to receive the royal assent. As to the idea of a perfect constitution being to consist of three parts, this was a trinity in which the Scots did not believe, and they satisfied themselves with holding the doctrine of the unity, the majesty, and uncontrollable power of the legislative authority.

fembles

seemles Fletcher; and may he close his career so as to deserve an equal character?

The irascibility of Fletcher's temper, and his high sense of honour, made him impatient of the slightest tendency towards an affront. Lord Stair, when secretary of state, having let fall some expressions in parliament, that seemed to glance at Fletcher, he seized Stair by the robe, in his place, and gave him the reply valiant. Lord Stair was called to order by the House, and was obliged to ask his pardon publicly.

Fletcher's speeches on the consideration of the Treaty of Union being printed in the following sheets of this volume, I shall only quote a passage of Alexander Cunningham's history, relating to his appearances on that important occasion.

"Andreas Fletserus, ut qui patriam prius

in libertatem vindicaret, bis se in vitæ discrimen intulerat, nunc vulnus insanabile reipublicæ inferendum, et Scotiam veluti funere per suos elatam, cernens hoc tempore extremo, in dicendo effervescit, reginæque ministros vehementer infectatur, et exagitat, nihil res domesticas, licet amplas, faciens. Sunt qui illius vim eloquentiæ, etiam in inimiciis gerendis, virtutem nimium effervuisse, & causæ nocuisse dicunt; *sed quid vetat filium in funere matris commoveri*, aut civem fortem in efferendam funere patriam, dolore graviter inuri, præsertim is qui reipublicæ commoda suis necessitudinibus semper potiora duxerat, mortemque pro patria toties oppetere non dubitaverat? Buchaniæ etiam comes ejusq; patruus Joannes Areskinus strenue pro patria contende-
bant,

bant, nihil pensi cum Galliæ factionis hominibus habentes."

Fletcher (says the anonymous author of his character in Thomas Rawlinson's library) was steady in his principles, of nice honour, great learning; brave as the sword he wore; a sure friend, but an irreconcilable enemy; and would not do a base thing to escape death.

He would not submit to be called either Whig or Tory, saying, *those names were given and used to cloak the knaves of both parties.* Bravo!

He had acquired the grammatical knowledge of the Italian so perfectly as to compose and publish a treatise in that language; yet he could not speak it, as he found when having an interview with Prince Eugene of Savoy, and being ad-

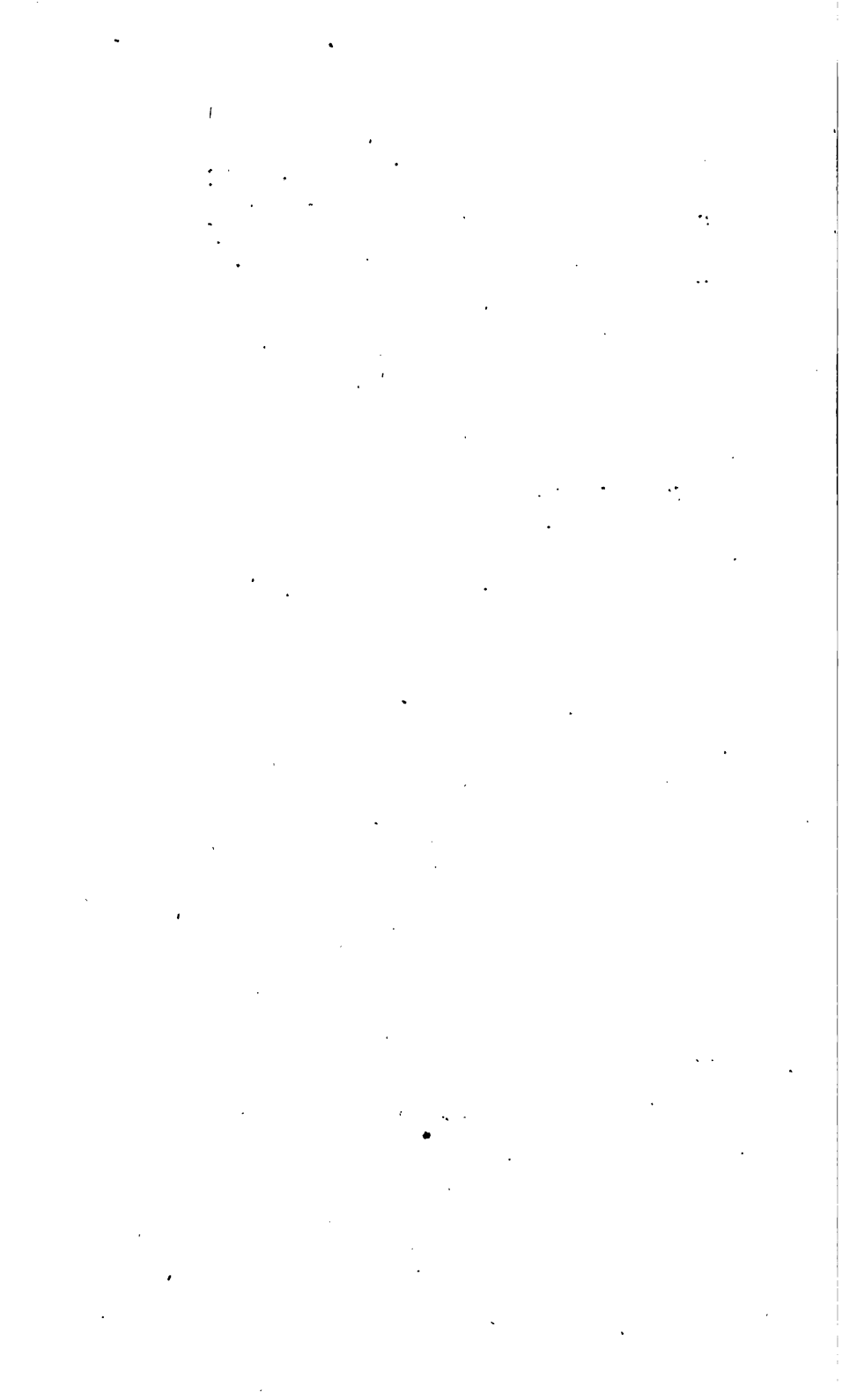
dressed in that language by the Prince,
 he could not utter a syllable to be under-
 stood. In his person he was of low
 stature, thin, of a brown complexion,
 with piercing eyes; and a gentle frown
 of keen sensibility appeared often upon
 his countenance.

To the memory of this extraordinary
 man I have reared this monument. The
 bodies of men are frail and perishing : so
 are their portraits and monuments : but,
 upheld by the power of the Creator,
 the form of the soul is eternal. This
 cannot be represented by statues or by
 pictures, nor otherwise than by a con-
 formity of manners. May whatever
 was great and truly valuable in Fletcher
 be for ever imitated by my countrymen,
 and may the splendour of his virtues re-
fect

flect honour upon his family, and glorify
his kindred throughout all generations!

Ille ego qui quondam patriæ perculsus amore
Civibus oppressis libertati succurrere ausus,
Nunc arva paterna colo, fugioq; limina regum.

*Dryburgh Abbey,
July 14, 1791.*



A P P E N D I X,

CONTAINING SOME ACCOUNT OF FLETCHER'S FAMILY; AND NOTES EXPLANATORY OF THE LIFE OF FLETCHER.

THE family of Fletcher of Saltoun descends from Sir Bernard Fletcher, a son of Fletcher of Hatton in the county of Cumberland. Robert, his son, established himself in the county of Tweeddale. Andrew, the son of Robert, was a merchant at Dundee, in the county of Angus or Forfar. David, the son of Andrew, purchased the estate of Innerpeffer in that county, and married a daughter of Ogilvie of Pourie,

Pourie, and by her had three sons, Robert, Andrew, and David. Robert died 1613, leaving six sons: Andrew; James, provost of Dundee; Robert, laird of Bencho; Sir George Fletcher of Restenet in Angusshire; and two others, who died in infancy.

Andrew was knighted by James I. 1620; the same year he succeeded his father in the estate of Innerpeffer. He bought the estate of Saltoun in East Lothian, in the year 1643, which had anciently given title to the Lords Abernethy of Saltoun, now represented by the Frasers of Cowie and Philorth, Lords Abernethy of Saltoun. He was one of the senators of the College of Justices in Scotland, by the title of Lord Innerpeffer, as has been mentioned in the life of his grandson; as well as his noble dissent from the surrender of Charles I. to the English army at Newcastle, with Lord

Cardrofs and others; who thought the king deferved to be punished, but not by thofe to whom he had entrusted the care of his protection.

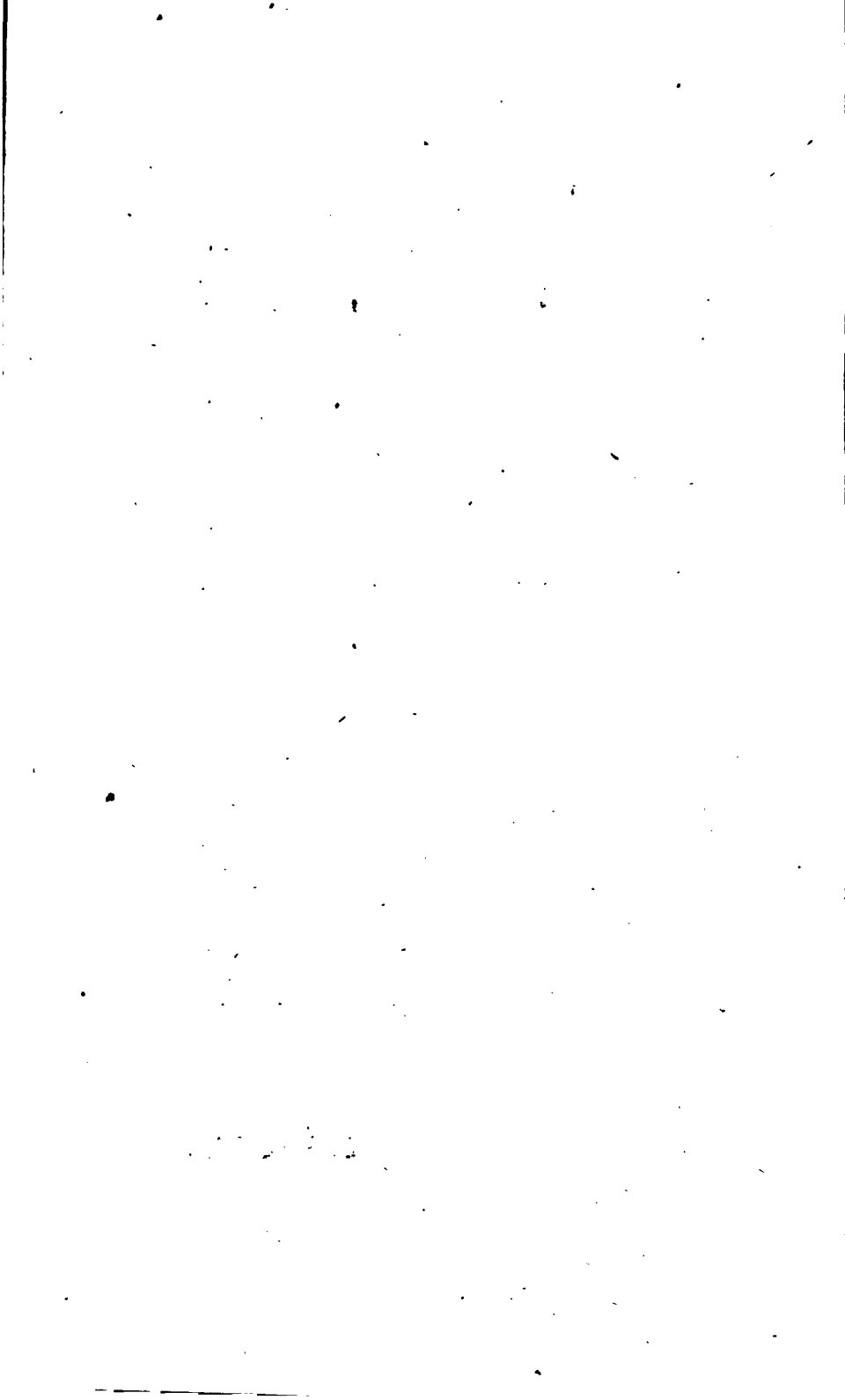
Lord Innerpeffer was the father of Sir Robert Fletcher of Saltoun, who was the father of the patriot.

With refpect to Fletcher's character in forfaking the Duke of Monmouth at Taunton, the following testimony of Fergufon, in a MS. quoted by Echard, in his History of England, ought to be well weighed and confidered before Fletcher be charged with unallowable defection.

“ The Duke of Monmouth was very fenfible of his precipitous adventure into England; but fuffered himfelf to be over-ruled, contrary to both the dictates of his judgment,

judgment, and the bias of his inclination; for could he have been allowed to have pursued his own sentiments and resolutions, he intended to have spent that summer in the court of Swedeland. But from this he was diverted by the importunity of the Earl of Argyll, and prevailed upon by the advice and intreaty of the Lord Grey and Mr. Wade (*contrary to the desires of Mr. Fletcher* and Captain Matthews) to hasten into England. To which I can say (saith Mr. Ferguson) I had the least accession of any who were about the Duke of Monmouth. Nor would the Earl of Argyll, after his own *ominous* haste, set sail for Scotland, till he forced a promise from the Duke of embarking for England within so many days after. Which the Duke, rather than suffer his honour to be stained, complied

complied with as far as weather would permit; though he found the observing his word to interfere with his interest, as well as all the principles of prudence and discretion."—My tenderness for the admirers of King William, and my regard for the illustrious house of Campbell, will not allow me to express what I suspect in the whole of this transaction in Holland. Argyll paid the amende honorable with a vengeance. And the descendants of Monmouth need not regret the cowardice and perjury of Charles II. nor the failure of poor Monmouth's attempt. It is remarkable that the heir of Monmouth is now the eventual heir general of that very Earl of Argyll, who precipitated the ruin of his patriarch.



SPEECHES OF MR. FLETCHER

On the QUESTION for the

SETTLEMENT

OF THE

SCOTTISH CROWN,

Delivered in the Scottish Parliament, 1703.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

I AM not surpris'd to find an act for a supply brought into this house at the beginning of a session. I know custom has, for a long time, made it common. But, I think, experience might teach us, that such acts should be the last of every session; or lie upon the table, till all other great affairs of the nation be finished, and then only granted. It is a strange proposition

position which is usually made in this house; that if we will give money to the crown, then the crown will give us good laws: as if we were to buy good laws of the crown, and pay money to our princes, that they may do their duty, and comply with their coronation oath. And yet this is not the worst; for we have often had promises of good laws, and when we have given the sums demanded, those promises have been broken, and the nation left to seek a remedy; which is not to be found, unless we obtain the laws we want, before we give a supply. And if this be a sufficient reason at all times to postpone a money-act, can we be blamed for doing so at this time, when the duty we owe to our country indispensably obliges us to provide for the common safety in case of an event, altogether out
of

of our power, and which must necessarily dissolve the government, unless we continue and secure it by new laws ; I mean the death of her majesty, which God in his mercy long avert? I move, therefore, that the house would take into consideration what acts are necessary to secure our religion, liberty, and trade, in case of the said event, before any act of supply, or other business whatever be brought into deliberation.

*Act concerning offices, &c. brought in by
the same member.*

‘THE estates of parliament taking
‘into their consideration, that, to the
‘great loss and detriment of this nation,
‘great sums of money are yearly carried

I

‘out

out of it, by those who wait and depend
at court, for places and preferments in
this kingdom: and that by Scotsmen,
employing English interest at court, in
order to obtain their several pretensions,
this nation is in hazard of being brought
to depend upon English ministers: and
likewise considering, that by reason our
princes do no more reside amongst us,
they cannot be rightly informed of the
merit of persons pretending to places,
offices, and pensions; therefore our so-
vereign lady, with advice and consent
of the estates of parliament, statutes and
ordains, that after the decease of her
majesty, whom God long preserve, and
heirs of her body failing, all places and
offices both civil and military, and all
pensions, formerly conferred by our
kings,

“kings, shall ever after be given by parliament, by way of ballot.”

II.

MR LORD CHANCELLOR,

WHEN our kings succeeded to the crown of England, the ministers of that nation took a short way to ruin us, by concurring with their inclinations to extend the prerogative in Scotland; and the great places and pensions conferred upon Scotsmen by that court, made them to be willing instruments in the work. From that time this nation began to give away their privileges one after the other, though they then stood more in need of having them enlarged. And as the col-

lections of our laws, before the Union of the Crowns, are full of acts to secure our liberty, those laws that have been made since that time are directed chiefly to extend the prerogative. And that we might not know what rights and liberties were still ours, nor be excited by the memory of what our ancestors enjoyed, to recover those we had lost, in the two last editions of our acts of parliament the most considerable laws for the liberty of the subject are industriously and designedly left out. All our affairs since the Union of the Crowns have been managed by the advice of English ministers, and the principal offices of the kingdom filled with such men as the court of England knew would be subservient to their designs: by which means they have had so visible an influence upon our whole administration, that

that we have, from that time, appeared to the rest of the world more like a conquered province, than a free independent people. The account is very short: whilst our princes are not absolute in England, they must be influenced by that nation, our ministers must follow the directions of the prince, or lose their places, and our places and pensions will be distributed according to the inclinations of a king of England, so long as a king of England has the disposal of them: neither shall any man obtain the least advancement, who refuses to vote in council and parliament under that influence. So that there is no way to free this country from a ruinous dependance upon the English court, unless by placing the power of conferring offices and pensions in the parliament, so long as we shall have the

same king with England. The ancient kings of Scotland, and even those of France, had not the power of conferring the chief offices of state, though each of them had only one kingdom to govern, and that the difficulty we labour under, of two kingdoms which have different interests governed by the same king, did not occur. Besides, we all know that the disposal of our places and pensions is so considerable a thing to a king of England, that several of our princes, since the Union of the Crowns, have wished to be free from the trouble of deciding between the many pretenders. That which would have given them ease, will give us liberty, and make us significant to the common interest of both nations. Without this, it is impossible to free us from a dependence on the English court: all other re-

medies and conditions of government will prove ineffectual, as plainly appears from the nature of the thing; for who is not sensible of the influence of places and pensions upon all men and all affairs? If our ministers continue to be appointed by the English court, and this nation may not be permitted to dispose of the offices and places of this kingdom to balance the English bribery, they will corrupt every thing to that degree, that if any of our laws stand in their way they will get them repealed. Let no man say, that it cannot be proved, that the English court has ever bestowed any bribe in this country. For they bestow all offices and pensions; they bribe us, and are masters of us at our own cost. It is nothing but an English interest in this house, that those, who wish well to

our country have to struggle with at this time. We may, if we please, dream of other remedies; but so long as Scotsmen must go to the English court to obtain offices of trust or profit in this kingdom, those offices will always be managed with regard to the court and interest of England, though to the betraying of the interest of this nation, whenever it comes in competition with that of England. And what less can be expected, unless we resolve to expect miracles, and that greedy, ambitious, and for the most part necessitous men, involved in great debts, burdened with great families, and having great titles to support, will lay down their places, rather than comply with an English interest in obedience to the prince's commands? Now, to find Scotsmen opposing this, and willing that English ministers, for

for this is the case, should have the disposal of places and pensions in Scotland, rather than their own parliament, is matter of great astonishment ; but that it should be so much as a question in the parliament, is altogether incomprehensible : and if an indifferent person were to judge, he would certainly say we were an English parliament. Every man knows that princes give places and pensions by the influence of those who advise them. So that the question comes to no more than, whether this nation would be in a better condition, if, in conferring our places and pensions, the prince should be determined by the parliament of Scotland, or by the ministers of a court, that make it their interest to keep us low and miserable. We all know that this is the cause of our poverty, misery and dependence. But we have been
for

for a long time so poor, so miserable, and depending, that we have neither heart nor courage, though we want not the means, to free ourselves,

III.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

PREJUDICE and opinion govern the world, to the great distress and ruin of mankind; and though we daily find men so rational as to charm by the disinterested rectitude of their sentiments in all other things, yet when we touch upon any wrong opinion with which they have been early prepossessed, we find them more irrational than any thing in nature; and not only not to be convinced, but obstinately resolved not to hear any reason against it. These prejudices are yet stronger
when

when they are taken up by great numbers of men, who confirm each other through the course of several generations, and seem to have their blood tainted, or, to speak more properly, their animal spirits influenced by them. Of these delusions, one of the strongest, and most pernicious, has been a violent inclination in many men to extend the prerogative of the prince to an absolute and unlimited power. And though, in limited monarchies, all good men profess and declare themselves enemies to all tyrannical practices, yet many, even of these, are found ready to oppose such necessary limitations as might secure them from the tyrannical exercise of power in a prince, not only subject to all the infirmities of other men, but, by the temptations arising from his power, to far greater. This humour has greatly increased

increased in our nation, since the Union of the Crowns; and the slavish submissions, which have been made necessary to procure the favours of the court, have cherished and fomented a slavish principle. But I must take leave to put the representatives of this nation in mind, that no such principles were in this kingdom before the Union of the Crowns; and that no monarchy in Europe was more limited, nor any people more jealous of liberty than the Scots. These principles were first introduced among us after the Union of the Crowns, and the prerogative extended to the overthrow of our ancient constitution, chiefly by the prelatical party; though the peevish, imprudent, and detestable conduct of the presbyterians, who opposed these principles only in others, drove many into them, gave them greater force,

force, and rooted them more deeply in this nation. Should we not be ashamed to embrace opinions contrary to reason, and contrary to the sentiments of our ancestors, merely upon account of the uncharitable and insupportable humour and ridiculous conduct of bigots of any sort? If then no such principles were in this nation, and the constitution of our government had greatly limited the prince's power before the Union of the Crowns; dare any man say he is a Scotsman, and refuse his consent to reduce the government of this nation, after the expiration of the intail, within the same limits as before that union? And if, since the Union of the Crowns, every one sees that we stand in need of more limitations; will any man act in so direct an opposition to his own reason, and the undoubted

doubted interest of his country, as not to concur in limiting the government yet more than before the Union, particularly by the addition of this so necessary limitation for which I am now speaking? My Lord, these are such clear demonstrations of what we ought to do in such conjunctures, that all men of common ingenuity must be ashamed of entering into any other measures. Let us not then tread in the steps of mean and fawning priests of any sort, who are always disposed to place an absolute power in the prince, if he on his part will gratify their ambition, and by all means support their form of church-government, to the persecution of all other men, who will not comply with their impositions. Let us begin where our ancestors left off before the Union of the Crowns, and be for the future,

future, more jealous of our liberties, because there is more need. But I must take upon me to say, that he who is not for setting great limitations upon the power of the prince, particularly that for which I am speaking, in case we have the same king with England, can act by no principle, whether he be a presbyterian, prelatical, or prerogative man, for the court of St. Germain, or that of Hanover; I say, he can act by no principle unless that of being a slave to the court of England for his own advantage. And therefore let not those, who go under the name of prerogative-men, cover themselves with the pretext of principles in this case; for such men are plainly for the prerogative of the English court over this nation, because this limitation is demanded

manded only in case we come to have the same king with England.

*Act for the security of the kingdom, brought
in by the same member.*

‘ **T**HE estates of parliament considering, that when it shall please God to
‘ afflict this nation with the death of our
‘ sovereign lady the queen (whom God of
‘ his infinite mercy long preserve) if the
‘ same shall happen to be without heirs
‘ of her body, this kingdom may fall into
‘ great confusion and disorder before a successor can be declared. For preventing
‘ thereof, our sovereign lady, with advice
‘ and consent of the estates of parliament,
‘ statutes and ordains, that if, at the afore-
‘ said time, any parliament or convention
of

‘ of estates shall be assembled, then the
‘ members of that parliament or conven-
‘ tion of estates shall take the administra-
‘ tion of the government upon them :
‘ excepting those barons and boroughs,
‘ who, at the aforesaid time, shall have
‘ any place or pension, mediately or im-
‘ mediately, of the crown : whose com-
‘ missions are hereby declared to be void ;
‘ and that new members shall be chosen
‘ in their place : but if there be no parlia-
‘ ment or convention of estates actually
‘ assembled, then the members of the cur-
‘ rent parliament shall assemble with all
‘ possible diligence : and if there be no
‘ current parliament, then the members
‘ of the last dissolved parliament, or con-
‘ vention of estates, shall assemble in like
‘ manner : and in those two last cases, so
‘ soon as there shall be one hundred

‘ members met, in which number the ba-
‘ rons and boroughs before-mentioned are
‘ not to be reckoned, they shall take the
‘ administration of the government upon
‘ them: but neither they, nor the mem-
‘ bers of parliament or convention of
‘ estates, if at the time aforesaid assem-
‘ bled, shall proceed to the weighty affair
‘ of naming and declaring a successor, till
‘ twenty days after they have assumed
‘ the administration of the government:
‘ both that there may be time for all the
‘ other members to come to Edinburgh,
‘ which is hereby declared the place of
‘ their meeting, and for the election of
‘ new barons and boroughs in place above-
‘ mentioned. But so soon as the twenty
‘ days are elapsed, then they shall proceed
‘ to the publishing, by proclamation, the
‘ conditions of government, on which
‘ they

‘ they will receive the successor to the
‘ imperial crown of this realm; which,
‘ in the case only of our being under the
‘ same king with England, are as follow.

1. ‘ That elections shall be made at
‘ every Michaelmas head-court for a new
‘ parliament every year: to sit the first of
‘ November next following, and adjourn
‘ themselves from time to time, till next
‘ Michaelmas: that they choose their own
‘ president, and that every thing shall be
‘ determined by balloting, in place of
‘ voting.

2. ‘ That so many lesser barons shall
‘ be added to the parliament, as there
‘ have been noblemen created since the
‘ last augmentation of the number of the
‘ barons; and that in all time coming, for
‘ every nobleman that shall be created,

‘ there shall be a baron added to the parliament.

3. ‘ That no man have vote in parliament but a nobleman or elected member.

4. ‘ That the king shall give the sanction to all laws offered by the estates ; and that the president of the parliament be empowered by his majesty to give the sanction in his absence, and have ten pounds sterling a day salary.

5. ‘ That a committee of one and thirty members, of which nine to be a quorum, chosen out of their own number, by every parliament, shall, during the intervals of parliament, under the king, have the administration of the government, be his council, and accountable to the next parliament ; with
power

‘ power on extraordinary occasions to
‘ call the parliament together : and that
‘ in the said council, all things be deter-
‘ mined by balloting in place of voting.

6. ‘ That the king, without consent
‘ of parliament, shall not have the power
‘ of making peace and war ; or that of
‘ concluding any treaty with any other
‘ state or potentate,

7. ‘ That all places and offices, both
‘ civil and military, and all pensions for-
‘ merly conferred by our kings, shall ever
‘ after be given by parliament.

8. ‘ That no regiment or company of
‘ horse, foot, or dragoons, be kept on foot
‘ in peace or war, but by consent of par-
‘ liament.

9. ‘ That all the fencible men of the
‘ nation, betwixt sixty and sixteen, be,
‘ with all diligence possible, armed with

‘ bayonets, and firelocks all of a caliber,
‘ and continue always provided in such
‘ arms, with ammunition suitable.

10. ‘ That no general indemnity, nor
‘ pardon for any transgression against the
‘ public, shall be valid without consent
‘ of parliament.

11. ‘ That the fifteen senators of the
‘ College of Justice shall be incapable of
‘ being members of parliament, or of any
‘ other office, or any pension: but the
‘ salary that belongs to their place to be
‘ increased as the parliament shall think
‘ fit: that the office of president shall be
‘ in three of their number to be named
‘ by parliament, and that there be no
‘ extraordinary lords. And also, that the
‘ lords of the justice-court shall be distinct
‘ from those of the session, and under the
‘ same restrictions.

12. ‘ That

12. ' That if any king break in upon any
' of these conditions of government, he
' shall, by the estates, be declared to have
' forfeited the crown.

' Which proclamation made, they are
' to go on to the naming and declaring
' a successor: and when he is declared,
' if present, are to read to him the claim
' of right and conditions of government
' above-mentioned; and to desire of him,
' that he may accept the crown accord-
' ingly; and he accepting, they are to
' administer to him the oath of corona-
' tion: but if the successor be not present,
' they are to delegate such of their own
' number as they shall think fit, to see
' the same performed, as said is: and
' are to continue in the administration
' of the government, until the successor's
' accepting of the crown, upon the afore-

‘ said terms, be known to them : where-
‘ upon having then a king at their head,
‘ they shall, by his authority, declare them-
‘ selves a parliament, and proceed to the
‘ doing of whatever shall be thought ex-
‘ pedient for the welfare of the realm. And
‘ it is likewise, by the authority aforesaid,
‘ declared, that if her present majesty
‘ shall think fit, during her own time,
‘ with the advice and consent of the
‘ estates of parliament, failing heirs of her
‘ body, to declare a successor, yet never-
‘ theless, after her majesty’s decease, the
‘ members of parliament or convention
‘ shall, in the several cases, and after the
‘ manner above specified, meet and admit
‘ the successor to the government, in the
‘ terms, and after the manner, as said is.
‘ And it is hereby further declared, that
‘ after the decease of her majesty, and
‘ failing

‘ failing heirs of her body, the foremen-
‘ tioned manner and method shall, in the
‘ several cases, be that of declaring and
‘ admitting to the government all those
‘ who shall hereafter succeed to the im-
‘ perial crown of this realm; and that it
‘ shall be high treason for any man to
‘ own or acknowledge any person as king
‘ or queen of this realm, till they are
‘ declared and admitted in the above-
‘ mentioned manner. And lastly, it is
‘ hereby declared, that by the death of
‘ her majesty, or any of her successors,
‘ all commissions, both civil and military,
‘ fall and are void; and that this act
‘ shall come in place of the seventeenth
‘ act of the sixth session of king William’s
‘ parliament. And all acts and laws, that
‘ any way derogate from this present act,
‘ are

'are hereby in so far declared void and
'abrogated,'

IV,

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

IT is the utmost height of human prudence to see and embrace every favourable opportunity; and if a word spoken in season does, for the most part, produce wonderful effects; of what consequence and advantage must it be to a nation in deliberations of the highest moment; in occasions, when past, for ever ir retrievable, to enter into the right path, and take hold of the golden opportunity which makes the most arduous things easy, and without which the most inconsiderable may put a stop to all our affairs? We

have this day an opportunity in our hands which if we manage to the advantage of the nation we have the honour to represent, we may, so far as the vicissitude and uncertainty of human affairs will permit, be for many ages easy and happy. But if we despise or neglect this occasion, we have voted our perpetual dependence on another nation. If men could always retain those just impressions of things they at some times have upon their minds, they would be much more steady in their actions. And as I may boldly say, that no man is to be found in this house, who, at some time or other, has not had that just sense of the miserable condition to which this nation is reduced by a dependence upon the English court, I should demand no more but the like impressions at this time to pass all the limitations mentioned

mentioned in the draught of an act I have already brought into this house; since they are not limitations upon any prince, who shall only be king of Scotland, nor do any way tend to separate us from England; but calculated merely to this end, that so long as we continue to be under the same prince with our neighbour nation, we may be free from the influence of English councils and ministers; that the nation may not be impoverished by an expensive attendance at court, and that the force and exercise of our government may be, as far as is possible, within ourselves. By which means trade, manufactures, and husbandry will flourish, and the affairs of the nation be no longer neglected, as they have been hitherto.

These are the ends to which all the limitations

tations are directed, that English councils may not hinder the acts of our parliaments from receiving the royal assent; that we may not be engaged without our consent in the quarrels they may have with other nations; that they may not obstruct the meeting of our parliaments, nor interrupt their sitting; that we may not stand in need of posting to London for places and pensions, by which, whatever particular men may get, the nation must always be a loser; nor apply for the remedies of our grievances to a court, where, for the most part, none are to be had. On the contrary, if these conditions of government be enacted, our constitution will be amended, and our grievances be easily redressed by a due execution of our own laws, which to this day we have never been able to obtain. The best and wisest

wisest men in England will be glad to hear that these limitations are settled by us. For though the ambition of courtiers lead them to desire an uncontrollable power at any rate; yet wiser men will consider, that when two nations live under the same prince, the condition of the one cannot be made intolerable, but a separation must inevitably follow, which will be dangerous if not destructive to both. The senate of Rome wisely determined in the business of the Privernates, that all people would take hold of the first opportunity to free themselves from an uneasy condition; that no peace could be lasting, in which both parties did not find their account; and that no alliance was strong enough to keep two nations in amity, if the condition of either were made worse by it. For my own part,
my

my lord chancellor, before I will consent to continue in our present miserable and languishing condition after the decease of her majesty, and heirs of her body failing, I shall rather give my vote for a separation from England at any rate. I hope no man, who is now possessed of an office, will take umbrage at these conditions of government, though some of them seem to diminish, and others do entirely suppress the place he possesses: for besides the scandal of preferring a private interest before that of our country, these limitations are not to take place immediately. The queen is yet young, and by the grace of God may live many years, I hope longer than all those she has placed in any trust; and should we not be happy, if those who, for the future, may design to recommend themselves for any office, could

could not do it by any other way than the favour of this house, which they who appear for these conditions well deserve in a more eminent degree? Would we rather court an English minister for a place than a parliament of Scotland? Are we afraid of being taken out of the hands of English courtiers, and left to govern ourselves? And do we doubt whether an English ministry or a Scots parliament will be most for the interest of Scotland? But that which seems most difficult in this question, and in which if satisfaction be given, I hope no man will pretend to be dissatisfied with these limitations, is the interest of a king of Great Britain. And here I shall take liberty to say, that as the limitations do no way affect any prince that may be king of Scotland only, so they will be found highly advantageous

to a king of Great Britain. Some of our late kings, when they have been perplexed about the affairs of Scotland, did let fall such expressions as intimated they thought them not worth their application. And indeed we ought not to wonder if princes, like other men, should grow weary of toiling where they find no advantage. But to set this affair in a true light: I desire to know, whether it can be more advantageous to a king of Great Britain to have an unlimited prerogative over this country, in our present ill condition, which turns to no account, than that this nation, grown rich and powerful under these conditions of government, should be able upon any emergency to furnish a good body of land forces, with a squadron of ships for war, all paid by ourselves, to assist his majesty in the wars

L

he

he may undertake for the defence of the protestant religion and liberties of Europe. Now, since I hope I have shewn, that those who are for the prerogative of the kings of Scotland, and all those who are possessed of places at this time, together with the whole English nation, as well as a king of Great Britain, have cause to be satisfied with these regulations of government, I would know what difficulty can remain; unless that, being accustomed to live in a dependency, and unacquainted with liberty, we know not so much as the meaning of the word; nor, if that should be explained to us, can ever persuade ourselves we shall obtain the thing, though we have it in our power, by a few votes, to set ourselves and our posterity free. To say that this will stop at the royal assent, is a suggestion disrespectful to her majesty,

and

and which ought neither to be mentioned in parliament, nor be considered by any member of this house. And, were this a proper time, I am confident I could say such things as, being represented to the queen, would convince her, that no person can have greater interest, nor obtain more lasting honour, by the enacting of these conditions of government, than her majesty. And if the nation be assisted in this exigency by the good offices of his grace the high commissioner, I shall not doubt to affirm, that in procuring this blessing to our country from her majesty, he will do more for us, than all the great men of that noble family, of which he is descended, ever did; though it seems to have been their peculiar province for divers ages, to defend the liberties of this nation against the power of the English

and the deceit of courtiers. What further arguments can I use to persuade this house to enact these limitations, and embrace this occasion, which we have so little deserved? I might bring many; but the most proper and effectual to persuade all, I take to be this: that our ancestors did enjoy the most essential liberties contained in the act I proposed: and though some few of less moment are among them which they had not, yet they were in possession of divers others not contained in these articles: that they enjoyed these privileges when they were separated from England, had their prince living among them, and consequently stood not in so great need of these limitations. Now, since we have been under the same prince with England, and therefore stand in the greatest need of them, we have not only neglected

neglected to make a due provision of that kind, but in divers parliaments have given away our liberties, and upon the matter subjected this crown to the court of England; and are become so accustomed to depend on them, that we seem to doubt whether we shall lay hold of this happy opportunity to resume our freedom. If nothing else will move us, at least let us not act in opposition to the light of our own reason and conscience, which daily represents to us the ill constitution of our government, the low condition into which we are sunk, and the extreme poverty, distress, and misery of our people. Let us consider whether we will have the nation continue in these deplorable circumstances, and lose this opportunity of bringing freedom and plenty among us. Sure the heart of every honest man must bleed daily, to

see the misery in which our commons, and even many of our gentry, live ; which has no other cause but the ill constitution of our government, and our bad government no other root but our dependence upon the court of England. If our kings lived among us, it would not be strange to find these limitations rejected. It is not the prerogative of a king of Scotland I would diminish, but the prerogative of English ministers over this nation. To conclude, these conditions of government being either such as our ancestors enjoyed, or principally directed to cut off our dependence on an English court, and not to take place during the life of the queen ; he who refuses his consent to them, whatever he may be by birth, cannot sure be a Scotsman by affection. This will be a true test to distinguish, not whig from tory,

presbyterian from episcopal, Hanover from St. Germans, nor yet a courtier from a man out of place ; but a proper test to distinguish a friend from an enemy to his country. And indeed we are split into so many parties, and cover ourselves with so many false pretexts, that such a test seems necessary to bring us into the light, and shew every man in his own colours. In a word, my lord chancellor, we are to consider, that though we suffer under many grievances, yet our dependence upon the court of England is the cause of all, comprehends them all, and is the band that ties up the bundle. If we break this, they will all drop and fall to the ground : if not, this band will straiten us more and more, till we shall be no longer a people.

I therefore humbly propose, that, for the security of our religion, liberty, and

L 4

trade,

trade, these limitations be declared, by a resolution of this house, to be the conditions, upon which the nation will receive a successor to the crown of this realm, after the decease of her present majesty, and failing heirs of her body, in case the said successor shall be also king or queen of England.

V.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

I AM sorry to hear what has been just now spoken from the throne. I know the duty I owe to her majesty, and the respect that is due to her commissioner; and therefore shall speak with a just regard to both. But the duty I owe to my country obliges me to say, that what we have now heard from the throne, must of necessity

proceed from English councils. If we had demanded, that these limitations should take place during the life of her majesty, or of the heirs of her body, perhaps we might have no great reason to complain, though they should be refused. But that her majesty should prefer the prerogative of she knows not who, to the happiness of the whole people of Scotland; that she should deny her assent to such conditions of government as are not limitations upon the crown of Scotland, but only such as are absolutely necessary to relieve us from a subjection to the court of England, must proceed from English councils; as well because there is no Scots minister now at London, as because I have had an account, which I believe to be too well grounded, that a letter to this effect has been sent down hither by the lord treasurer

furor of England, not many days ago. Besides, all men who have lately been at London well know, that nothing has been more common, than to see Scotsmen of the several parties addressing themselves to English ministers about Scots affairs; and even to some ladies of that court, whom, for the respect I bear to their relations, I shall not name. Now, whether we shall continue under the influence and subjection of the English court; or whether it be not high time to lay before her majesty, by a vote of this house, the conditions of government upon which we will receive a successor, I leave to the wisdom of the parliament. This I must say, that to tell us any thing of her majesty's intentions in this affair, before we have presented any act to that purpose for the royal assent, is to prejudice the cause,

and

and altogether unparliamentary. I will add, that nothing has ever shewn the power and force of English councils upon our affairs in a more eminent manner at any time, since the union of the crowns. No man in this house is more convinced of the great advantage of that peace which both nations enjoy by living under one prince. But as, on the one hand, some men, for private ends, and in order to get into offices, have either neglected or betrayed the interest of this nation, by a mean compliance with the English court; so on the other side it cannot be denied, that we have been but indifferently used by the English nation. I shall not insist upon the affair of Darien, in which, by their means and influence chiefly, we suffered so great a loss both in men and money, as to put us almost beyond hope
of

of ever having any considerable trade; and this contrary to their own true interest, which now appears but too visibly. I shall not go about to enumerate instances of a provoking nature in other matters, but keep myself precisely to the thing we are upon. The English nation did, some time past, take into consideration the nomination of a successor to that crown; an affair of the highest importance, and, one would think, of common concernment to both kingdoms. Did they ever require our concurrence? Did they ever desire the late king to cause the parliament of Scotland to meet, in order to take our advice and consent? Was not this to tell us plainly, that we ought to be concluded by their determinations, and were not worthy to be consulted in the matter? Indeed, my lord chancellor, considering
their

their whole carriage in this affair, and the broad insinuations we have now heard, that we are not to expect her majesty's assent to any limitations on a successor (which must proceed from English councils), and considering we cannot propose to ourselves any other relief from that servitude we lie under by the influence of that court; it is my opinion, that the house come to a resolution, *That after the decease of her majesty, heirs of her body failing, we will separate our crown from that of England.*

VI.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

THAT there should be limitations on a successor, in order to take away our dependence on the court of England, if both
nations

nations should have the same king, no man here seems to oppose. And I think very few will be of opinion, that such limitations should be deferred till the meeting of the nation's representatives upon the decease of her majesty. For if the successor be not named before that time, every one will be so earnest to promote the pretensions of the person he most affects, that new conditions will be altogether forgotten. So that those who are only in appearance for these limitations, and in reality against them, endeavour for their last refuge to mislead well-meaning men, by telling them, that it is not advisable to put them into the act of security, as well for fear of losing all, as because they will be more conveniently placed in a separate act. My lord chancellor, I would fain know if any thing can be
more

more proper in an act which appoints the naming and manner of admitting a successor, than the conditions on which we agree to receive him. I would know, if the deferring of any thing, at a time when naturally it should take place, be not to put a slur upon it, and an endeavour to defeat it. And if the limitations in question are pretended to be such a burden in the act, as to hazard the loss of the whole, can we expect to obtain them when separated from the act? Is there any common sense in this? Let us not deceive ourselves, and imagine that the act of 1696 does not expire immediately after the queen and heirs of her body; for in all that act, the heirs and successors of his late majesty king William are always restrained and specified by these express words, ‘ according to the declaration of the estates,
‘ dated

‘dated the 11th of April 1689.’ So that, unless we make a due provision by some new law, a dissolution of the government will ensue immediately upon the death of her majesty, failing heirs of her body. Such an act therefore being of absolute and indispensable necessity, I am of opinion, that the limitations ought to be inserted therein as the only proper place for them, and surest way to obtain them: and that whoever would separate them, does not so much desire we should obtain the act, as that we should lose the limitations.

VII.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

I HOPE I need not inform this honourable house, that all acts which can be proposed

posed for the security of this kingdom, are vain and empty propositions, unless they are supported by arms ; and that to rely upon any law, without such a security, is to lean upon a shadow. We had better never pass this act : for then we shall not imagine we have done any thing for our security ; and if we think we can do any thing effectual without that provision, we deceive ourselves, and are in a most dangerous condition. Such an act cannot be said to be an act for the security of any thing, in which the most necessary clause is wanting, and without which all the rest is of no force ; neither can any kingdom be really secured but by arming the people. Let no man pretend that we have standing forces to support this law ; and that, if their numbers be not sufficient, we may raise more. It is very well known

M

this

this nation cannot maintain so many standing forces as would be necessary for our defence, though we could entirely rely upon their fidelity. The possession of arms is the distinction of a freeman from a slave. He who has nothing, and belongs to another, must be defended by him, and needs no arms: but he who thinks he is his own master, and has any thing he may call his own, ought to have arms to defend himself and what he possesses, or else he lives precariously and at discretion. And though for a while those who have the sword in their power abstain from doing him injuries; yet, by degrees, he will be awed into a submission to every arbitrary command. Our ancestors, by being always armed, and frequently in action, defended themselves against the Romans, Danes, and English; and maintained their liberty

liberty against the incroachments of their own princes. If we are not rich enough to pay a sufficient number of standing forces, we have at least this advantage, that arms in our own hands serve no less to maintain our liberty at home, than to defend us from enemies abroad. Other nations, if they think they can trust standing forces, may, by their means, defend themselves against foreign enemies. But we, who have not wealth sufficient to pay such forces, should not, of all nations under heaven, be unarmed. For us then to continue without arms, is to be directly in the condition of slaves: to be found unarmed, in the event of her majesty's death, would be to have no manner of security for our liberty, property, or the independence of this kingdom. By being unarmed, we every day run the risk of our

all, since we know not how soon that event may overtake us: to continue still unarmed, when, by this very act now under deliberation, we have put a case, which happening may separate us from England, would be the grossest of all follies. And if we do not provide for arming the kingdom in such an exigency, we shall become a jest and a proverb to the world.

VIII.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

IF in the sad event of her majesty's decease without heirs of her body, any considerable military force should be in the hands of one or more men, who might have an understanding together, we are not very sure what use they would make
of

of them in so nice and critical a conjuncture. We know, that as the most just and honourable enterprises, when they fail, are accounted in the number of rebellions; so all attempts, however unjust, if they succeed, always purge themselves of all guilt and imputation. If a man presume he shall have success, and obtain the utmost of his hopes, he will not too nicely examine the point of right, nor balance too scrupulously the injury he does to his country. I would not have any man take this for a reflection upon those honourable persons, who have at present the command of our troops. For, besides that we are not certain who shall be in those commands at the time of such an event, we are to know that all men are frail, and the wicked and mean-spirited world has paid too much honour to many,

who have subverted the liberties of their country. We see a great disposition at this time in some men, not to consent to any limitations on a successor, though we should name the same with England. And therefore since this is probably the last opportunity we shall ever have of freeing ourselves from our dependence on the English court, we ought to manage it with the utmost jealousy and diffidence of such men. For though we have ordered the nation to be armed and exercised, which will be a sufficient defence when done; yet we know not but the event, which God avert, may happen before this can be effected. And we may easily imagine, what a few bold men, at the head of a small number of regular troops, might do, when all things are in confusion and suspense. So that we ought

to make effectual provision, with the utmost circumspection, that all such forces may be subservient to the government and interest of this nation, and not to the private ambition of their commanders. I therefore move, that immediately upon the decease of her majesty, all military commissions above that of a captain be null and void.

IX.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

I KNOW it is the undoubted prerogative of her majesty, that no act of this house shall have the force of a law without her royal assent. And as I am confident his grace the high commissioner is sufficiently instructed, to give that assent to

M 4

every

every act which shall be laid before him ; so more particularly to the act for the security of the kingdom, which has already passed this house : an act that preserves us from anarchy : an act that arms a defenceless people : an act that has cost the representatives of this kingdom much time and labour to frame, and the nation a very great expence : an act that has passed by a great majority : and above all, an act that contains a caution of the highest importance for the amendment of our constitution. I did not presume the other day, immediately after this act was voted, to desire the royal assent ; I thought it a just deference to the high commissioner, not to mention it at that time. Neither would I now, but only that I may have an opportunity to represent to his grace, that as he who gives readily doubles the gift ; so his
grace

grace has now in his hands the most glorious and honourable occasion, that any person of this nation ever had, of making himself acceptable, and his memory for ever grateful to the people of this kingdom : since the honour of giving the royal assent to a law, which lays a lasting foundation for their liberties, has been reserved to him.

X.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

ON the day that the act for the security of the kingdom passed in this house, I did not presume to move for the royal assent. The next day of our meeting, I mentioned it with all imaginable respect and deference, for his grace the high commissioner,

missioner, and divers honourable persons seconded me. If now, after the noble lord who spoke last, I insist upon it, I think I am no way to be blamed. I shall not endeavour to shew the necessity of this act, in which the whole security of the nation now lies, having spoken to that point the other day: but shall take occasion to say something concerning the delay of giving the royal assent to acts passed in this house; for which I could never hear a good reason, except that a commissioner was not sufficiently instructed. But that cannot be the true reason at this time, because several acts have lain long for the royal assent: in particular, that to ratify a former act, for turning the convention into a parliament, and fencing the claim of right, which no man doubts his grace is sufficiently

ciently instructed to pass. We must therefore look elsewhere for the reason of this delay, and ought to be excused in doing this; since so little regard is had, and so little satisfaction given to the representatives of this nation, who have for more than three months employed themselves with the greatest assiduity in the service of their country, and yet have not seen the least fruit of their labours crowned with the royal assent. Only one act has been touched, for recognizing her majesty's just right, which is a thing of course. This gives but too good reason to those who speak freely, to say that the royal assent is industriously suspended, in order to oblige some men to vote, as shall be most expedient to a certain interest; and that this session of parliament is continued so long, chiefly to make men uneasy, who
have

have neither places nor pensions to bear their charges; that by this means acts for money, importation of French wine, and the like, may pass in a thin house; which will not fail immediately to receive the royal assent, whilst the acts that concern the welfare, and perhaps the very being of the nation, remain untouched.

XI.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

BEING under some apprehensions that her majesty may receive ill advice in this affair, from ministers who frequently mistake former bad practices for good precedents, I desire that the third act of the first session of the first parliament of king Charles the Second may be read.

Act

Act the third of the first session, Par. I.

Car. II.

*Act asserting his majesty's royal prerogative,
in calling and dissolving of parliaments,
and making of laws,*

‘ **T**HE estates of parliament, now convened by his majesty's special authority,
‘ considering that the quietness, stability,
‘ and happiness of the people, do depend
‘ upon the safety of the king's majesty's
‘ sacred person, and the maintenance of
‘ his sovereign authority, princely power,
‘ and prerogative royal; and conceiving
‘ themselves obliged in conscience, and
‘ in discharge of their duties to almighty
‘ God, to the king's majesty, and to their
‘ native country, to make a due acknowledgment thereof at this time, do therefore unanimously declare, that they will,
‘ with

‘ with their lives and fortunes, maintain
‘ and defend the same. And they do
‘ hereby acknowledge, that the power of
‘ calling, holding, proroguing, and dis-
‘ solving of parliaments, and all conven-
‘ tions and meetings of the estates does
‘ solely reside in the king’s majesty, his
‘ heirs and successors. And that as no
‘ parliament can be lawfully kept, without
‘ the special warrant and presence of the
‘ king’s majesty, or his commissioner;
‘ so no acts, sentences or statutes, to be
‘ passed in parliament, can be binding
‘ upon the people, or have the authority
‘ and force of laws, without the special
‘ authority and approbation of the king’s
‘ majesty, or his commissioner interponed
‘ thereto, at the making thereof. And
‘ therefore the king’s majesty, with ad-
‘ vice and consent of his estates of parlia-
‘ ment,

ment, doth hereby rescind and annul all laws, acts, statutes, or practices that have been, or upon any pretext whatsoever may be, or seem contrary to, or inconsistent with, his majesty's just power and prerogative above-mentioned; and declares the same to have been unlawful, and to be void and null in all time coming. And to the end that this act and acknowledgment, which the estates of parliament, from the sense of their humble duty and certain knowledge, have hereby made, may receive the more exact obedience in time coming; it is by his majesty, with advice aforesaid, statute and ordained, that the punctual observance thereof be specially regarded by all his majesty's subjects, and that none of them, upon any pretext whatsoever, offer to call in question, impugn,

'pugn, or do any deed to the contrary
'hereof; under pain of treason.'

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

THE questions concerning the king's prerogative and the people's privileges are nice and difficult. Mr. William Colvin, who was one of the wisest men this nation ever had, used to say concerning defensive arms, that he wished all princes thought them lawful, and the people unlawful. And indeed I heartily wish, that something like these moderate sentiments might always determine all matters in question between both. By the constitution of this kingdom, no act of the estates had the force of a law, unless touched by the king's sceptre, which was his undoubted prerogative. The touch of his sceptre gave authority to our laws, as
his

his stamp did a currency to our coin : but he had no right to refuse or with-hold either. It is pretended by some men, that, in virtue of this act, the king may refuse the royal assent to acts passed by the estates of the kingdom. But it ought to be considered, that this law is only an acknowledgment and declaration of the king's prerogative, and consequently gives nothing new to the prince. The act acknowledges this to be the prerogative of the king, that whatever is passed in this house, cannot have the force of a law without the royal assent, and makes it high treason to question this prerogative ; because the parliament, during the civil war, had usurped a power of imposing their own votes upon the people for law, though neither the king, nor any person commissioned by him were present : and

N

this

this new law was wholly and simply directed to abolish and rescind that usurpation, as appears by the tenour and express words of the act; which does neither acknowledge nor declare, that the prince has a power to refuse the royal assent to any act presented by the parliament. If any one should say, that the lawgivers designed no less, and that the principal contrivers and promoters of the act frequently boasted they had obtained the negative, as they call it, for the crown; I desire to know how they will make that appear, since no words are to be found in the act, that shew any such design: especially if we consider that this law was made by a parliament that spoke the most plainly, least equivocally, and most fully of all others concerning the prerogative. And if those who promoted the passing of
this

this act were under so strong a delusion, to think they had obtained a new and great prerogative to the crown by a declaratory law, in which there is not one word to that purpose, it was the hand of Heaven that defeated their design of destroying the liberty of their country. I know our princes have refused their assent to some acts since the making of this law: but a practice introduced in arbitrary times can deserve no consideration. For my own part, I am far from pushing things to extremity on either hand: I heartily enter into the sentiments of the wise man I mentioned before, and think the people of this nation might have been happy in mistaking the meaning of this law, if such men, as have had the greatest credit with our princes, would have let them into the true sense of it. And therefore those,

who have the honour to advise her majesty, should beware of inducing her to a refusal of the royal assent to the act for the security of the kingdom, because the unwarrantable custom of rejecting acts was introduced in arbitrary times.

XII.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

IT is often said in this house, that parliaments, and especially long sessions of parliament, are a heavy tax and burden to this nation: I suppose they mean as things are usually managed: otherwise I should think it a great reflection on the wisdom of the nation, and a maxim very pernicious to our government. But indeed in the present state of things, they are a very great burden to us. Our parliament

liament seldom meets in winter, when the season of the year, and our own private affairs, bring us to town. We are called together for the most part in summer, when our country business, and the goodness of the season, make us live in town with regret. Our parliaments are sitting both in seed time and harvest, and we are made to toil the whole year. We meet one day in three; though no reason can be given why we should not meet every day, unless such a one as I am unwilling to name, lest thereby occasion should be taken to mention it elsewhere to the reproach of the nation. The expences of our commissioners are now become greater than those of our kings formerly were: and a great part of this money is laid out upon equipage, and other things of foreign manufacture, to the great damage of the king-

dom. We meet in this place in the afternoon, after a great dinner, which I think is not the time of doing business; and are in such confusion after the candles are lighted, that very often the debate of one single point cannot be finished; but must be put off to another day. Parliaments are forced to submit to the conveniences of the lords of the session, and meetings of the boroughs; though no good reason can be given, why either a lord of the session, or any one deputed to the meetings of the boroughs, should be a member of this house; but, on the contrary, experience has taught us the inconvenience of both. When members of parliament, to perform the duty they owe to their country, have left the most important affairs, and quitted their friends many times in the utmost extremity, to be present at
this

this place, they are told they may return again ; as we were the other day called together only in order to be dismissed. We have been for several days adjourned in this time of harvest, when we had the most important affairs under deliberation ; that as well those, who have neither place nor pension, might grow weary of their attendance, as those whose ill state of health makes the service of their country as dangerous, though no less honourable than if they served in the field. Do not these things shew us the necessity of those limitations I had the honour to offer to this house ? and particularly of that for lodging the power of adjournments in the parliament ; that for meetings of parliament to be in winter ; that for empowering the president to give the royal assent, and ascertaining his salary ; with that for ex-

N 4

cluding

cluding all lords of the session from being members of parliament? Could one imagine that in this parliament, in which we have had the first opportunity of amending our constitution by new conditions of government, occasion should be given by reiterating former abuses, to convince all men of the necessity of farther limitations upon a successor? Or is not this rather to be attributed to a peculiar providence, that those who are the great opposers of limitations, should, by their conduct, give the best reason for them? But I hope no member of this house will be discouraged either by delay or opposition; because the liberties of a people are not to be maintained without passing through great difficulties, and that no toil and labours ought to be declined to preserve a nation from slavery.

XIII.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

I HAVE waited long and with great patience for the result of this session, to see if I could discover a real and sincere intention in the members of this house, to restore the freedom of our country in this great and, perhaps, only opportunity. I know there are many different views among us, and all men pretend the good of the nation. But every man here is obliged carefully to examine the things before us, and to act according to his knowledge and conscience, without regard to the views of other men, whatever charity he may have for them: I say, every man in this place is obliged, by the
oath

oath he has taken, to give such advice as he thinks most expedient for the good of his country. The principal business of this session has been the forming of an act for the security of the kingdom, upon the expiration of the present entail of the crown. And though one would have thought, that the most essential thing which could have entered into such an act, had been to ascertain the conditions on which the nation would receive a successor, yet this has been entirely waved and over-ruled by the house. Only there is a caution inserted in the act, that the successor shall not be the same person who is to succeed in England, unless such conditions of government be first enacted, as may secure the freedom of this nation. But this is a general and indefinite clause, and liable to the dangerous inconveniency

of being declared to be fulfilled by giving us two or three inconsiderable laws. So that this session of parliament, in which we have had so great an opportunity of making ourselves for ever a free people, is like to terminate without any real security for our liberties, or any essential amendment of our constitution. And now, when we ought to come to particulars, and enact such limitations as may fully satisfy the general clause, we must amuse ourselves with things of little significance, and hardly mention any limitation of moment or consequence. But instead of this, acts are brought in for regulations to take place during the life of the queen, which we are not to expect, and quite draw us off from the business we should attend. By these methods divers well-meaning men have been deluded, whilst others
have

have proposed a present nomination of a successor under limitations. But I fear the far greater part have designed to make their court either to her majesty, the house of Hanover, or those of St. Germans, by maintaining the prerogative in Scotland as high as ever, to the perpetual enslaving of this nation to the ministers of England. Therefore I, who have never made court to any prince, and I hope never shall, at the rate of the least prejudice to my country, think myself obliged, in discharge of my conscience, and the duty of my oath in parliament, to offer such limitations as may answer the general clause in the act for the security of the kingdom. And this I do in two draughts, the one containing the limitations by themselves; the other with the same limitations, and a blank for inserting the name
of

of a successor. If the house shall think fit to take into consideration that draught which has no blank, and enact the limitations, I shall rest satisfied, being as little fond of naming a successor as any man. Otherwise, I offer the draught with a blank; to the end that every man may make his court to the person he most affects; and hope by this means to please all parties: the court, in offering them an opportunity to name the successor of England, a thing so acceptable to her majesty and that nation: those who may favour the court of St. Germain, by giving them a chance for their pretensions; and every true Scotsman, in vindicating the liberty of this nation, whoever be the successor.

FIRST

FIRST DRAUGHT.

OUR soveraign lady, with advice and
consent of the estates of parliament, statutes and ordains, that after the decease
of her majesty, whom God long preserve, and failing heirs of her body, no
one shall succeed to the crown of this
realm that is likewise successor to the
crown of England, but under the limitations following, which, together with
the oath of coronation and claim of
right, they shall swear to observe. That
all places and offices, both civil and military, and all pensions formerly conferred
by our kings, shall ever after be given
by parliament.—That a new parliament
shall be chosen every Michaelmas head-
court,

‘ court, to sit the first of November there-
‘ after, and adjourn themselves from time
‘ to time till next Michaelmas; and that
‘ they choose their own president.—That a
‘ committee of thirty-six members, chosen
‘ by and out of the whole parliament,
‘ without distinction of estates, shall, dur-
‘ ing the intervals of parliament, under the
‘ king, have the administration of the
‘ government, be his council, and account-
‘ able to parliament; with power, in ex-
‘ traordinary occasions, to call the parlia-
‘ ment together.’

SECOND DRAUGHT.

‘ **O**UR sovereign lady, with advice and
‘ consent of the estates of parliament, sta-
‘ tutes and ordains, that after the decease
‘ of

‘ of her majesty, whom God long pre-
‘ serve, and heirs of her body failing,
‘ shall succeed to the
‘ crown of this realm. But that in case
‘ the said successor be likewise the suc-
‘ cessor to the crown of England, the
‘ said successor shall be under the limita-
‘ tions following,’ &c.

No man can be an enemy to these limitations, in case we have the same king with England, except he who is so shameless a partisan either of the court at St. Germain, or the house of Hanover, that he would rather see Scotland continue to depend upon an English ministry, than that their prerogative should be any way lessened in this kingdom. As for those who have St. Germain in their view, and are accounted the highest of all the prerogative-

rogative-men, I would ask them, if we should assist them in advancing their prince to the throne of Great Britain, are we, for our reward, to continue still in our former dependence on the English court? These limitations are the only test to discover a lover of his country from a courtier either to her majesty, Hanover, or St. Germain's. For prerogative men, who are for enslaving this nation to the directions of another court, are courtiers to any successor; and let them pretend what they will, if their principles lead necessarily to subject this nation to another, are enemies to the nation. These men are so absurd as to provoke England, and yet resolve to continue slaves of that court. This country must be made a field of blood, in order to advance a papist to the throne of Britain. If we fail, we shall be slaves by right of conquest;

O

conquest; if we prevail, have the happiness to continue in our former slavish dependence. And though to break this yoke, all good men would venture their all, yet I believe few will be willing to lie at the mercy of France and popery, and at the same time draw upon themselves the indignation and power of England, for the sake only of measuring our strength with a much more powerful nation; and to be sure to continue still under our former dependence, though we should happen to prevail. Now, of those who are for the same success with England, I would ask, if in that case we are not also to continue in our former dependence; which will not fail always to grow from bad to worse, and at length become more intolerable to all honest men, than death itself. For my own part, I think, that even the most
zealous

zealous protestant in the nation, if he have a true regard for his country, ought rather to wish, were it consistent with our claim of right, that a papist should succeed to the throne of Great Britain, under such limitations as would render this nation free and independent, than the most protestant and best prince, without any. If we may live free, I little value who is king: it is indifferent to me, provided the limitations be enacted, to name or not name; Hanover, St Germans, or whom you will.

XIV.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

HIS grace, the high commissioner, having acquainted this house, that he has instructions from her majesty, to give the

royal assent to all acts passed in this session, except that for the security of the kingdom, it will be highly necessary to provide some new laws for securing our liberty upon the expiration of the present entail of the crown. And therefore I shall speak to the first article of the limitations contained in the short act I offered the other day; not only because it is the first in order, but because I persuade myself you all know that parliaments were formerly chosen annually; that they had the power of appointing the times of their meetings and adjournments, together with the nomination of committees to superintend the administration of the government during the intervals of parliament: all which, if it were necessary, might be proved by a great number of public acts. So that if I demonstrate the use and necessity

cellity of the first article, there will remain no great difficulty concerning the rest.

MY LORD CHANCELLOR,

THE condition of a people, however unhappy, if they not only know the cause of their misery, but have also the remedy in their power, and yet should refuse to apply it, one would think, were not to be pitied. And though the condition of good men, who are concluded and oppressed by a majority of the bad, is much to be lamented ; yet christianity teaches us to shew a greater measure of compassion to those who are knowingly and voluntarily obstinate to ruin both themselves and others. But the regret of every wise and good man must needs be extraordinary, when he sees the liberty and happiness of his

country not only obstructed, but utterly extinguished by the private and transitory interest of self-designing men, who indeed very often meet their own ruin, but most certainly bring destruction upon their posterity by such courses. Sure, if a man who is intrusted by others, should, for his own private advantage, betray that trust, to the perpetual and irrecoverable ruin of those who trusted him, the liveliest sense and deepest remorse for so great guilt, will undoubtedly seize and terrify the conscience of such a man, as often as the treacherous part he has acted shall recur to his thoughts; which will most frequently happen in the times of his distress, and the nearer he approaches to a life in which those remorsees are perpetual. But I hope every man in this house has so well considered these things, as to preserve
him

him from falling into such terrible circumstances: and (as all men are subject to great failings) if any person, placed in this most eminent trust, is conscious to himself of having ever been wanting in duty to his country, I doubt not he will this day, in this weighty matter, atone for all, and not blindly follow the opinion of other men, because he alone must account for his own actions to his great Lord and Master.

The limitation, to which I am about to speak, requires, that all places, offices, and pensions, which have been formerly given by our kings, shall, after her majesty and heirs of her body, be conferred by parliament, so long as we are under the same prince with England. Without this limitation, our poverty and subjection to the court of England will every day in-

crease; and the question we have now before us is, whether we will be freemen or slaves for ever? whether we will continue to depend, or break the yoke of our dependence? and whether we will choose to live poor and miserable, or rich, free, and happy? Let no man think to object, that this limitation takes away the whole power of the prince. For the same condition of government is found in one of the most absolute monarchies of the world. I have very good authority for what I say, from all the best authors that have treated of the government of China; but shall only cite the words of an able minister of state, who had very well considered whatever had been written on that subject; I mean Sir William Temple, who says, ‘ That for the government, it is absolute monarchy, there being no other laws in China, but

‘ but the king’s orders and commands;
‘ and it is likewise hereditary, still de-
‘ scending to the next of blood. But all
‘ orders and commands of the king pro-
‘ ceed through his councils; and are made
‘ upon the recommendation or petition of
‘ the council proper and appointed for that
‘ affair: so that all matters are debated, de-
‘ termined, and concluded by the several
‘ councils; and then upon their advices
‘ and requests made to the king, they are
‘ ratified and signed by him, and so pass
‘ into laws. All great offices of state are
‘ likewise conferred by the king, upon the
‘ same recommendations or petitions of
‘ his several councils; so that none are
‘ preferred by the humour of the prince
‘ himself, nor by favour of any minister,
‘ by flattery or corruption, but by the
‘ force or appearance of merit, of learn-
‘ ing,

‘ing, and of virtue; which observed by
‘the several councils, gain their recom-
‘mendations or petitions to the king.’
These are the express words of that minister. And if under the greatest absolute monarchy of the world, in a country where the prince actually resides; if among heathens this be accounted a necessary part of government for the encouragement of virtue, shall it be denied to Christians living under a prince who resides in another nation? Shall it be denied to a people, who have a right to liberty, and yet are not capable of any in their present circumstances without this limitation? But we have formed to ourselves such extravagant notions of government, that even in a limited monarchy nothing will please, which in the least deviates from the model of France, and every thing else must stand

branded with the name of commonwealth. Yet a great and wise people found this very condition of government necessary to support even an absolute monarchy. If any man say, that the empire of China contains divers kingdoms; and that the care of the emperor, and his knowledge of particular men, cannot extend to all: I answer, the case is the same with us; and it seems as if that wise people designed this constitution for a remedy to the like inconveniences with those we labour under at this time.

This limitation will undoubtedly enrich the nation, by stopping that perpetual issue of money to England, which has reduced this country to extreme poverty. This limitation does not flatter us with the hopes of riches by an uncertain project; does not require so much as the condition

dition of our own industry; but, by saving great sums to the country, will every year furnish a stock sufficient to carry on a considerable trade, or to establish some useful manufacture at home, with the highest probability of success: because our ministers, by this rule of government, would be freed from the influence of English councils; and our trade be entirely in our own hands, and not under the power of the court, as it was in the affair of Darien. If we do not obtain this limitation, our attendance at London will continue to drain this nation of all those sums which should be a stock for trade. Besides, by frequenting that court, we not only spend our money, but learn the expensive modes and ways of living, of a rich and luxurious nation: we lay out yearly great sums in furniture and equipage,

page, to the unspeakable prejudice of the trade and manufactures of our own country. Not that I think it amiss to travel into England, in order to see and learn their industry in trade and husbandry. But at court what can we learn, except a horrid corruption of manners, and an expensive way of living, that we may for ever after be both poor and profligate?

This limitation will secure to us our freedom and independence. It has been often said in this house, that our princes are captives in England; and indeed one would not wonder if, when our interest happens to be different from that of England, our kings, who must be supported by the riches and power of that nation in all their undertakings, should prefer an English interest before that of this country. It is yet less strange, that
English

English ministers should advise and procure the advancement of such persons to the ministry of Scotland; as will comply with their measures and the king's orders; and to surmount the difficulties they may meet with from a true Scots interest, that places and pensions should be bestowed upon parliament-men and others: I say, these things are so far from wonder, that they are inevitable in the present state of our affairs. But I hope they likewise shew us, that we ought not to continue any longer in this condition. Now, this limitation is advantageous to all. The prince will no more be put upon the hardship of deciding between an English and a Scots interest; or the difficulty of reconciling what he owes to each nation, in consequence of his coronation oath. Even English ministers
will

will no longer lie under the temptation of meddling in Scots affairs: nor the ministers of this kingdom, together with all those who have places and pensions, be any more subject to the worst of all slavery. But if the influences I mentioned before shall still continue, what will any other limitation avail us? What shall we be the better for our act concerning the power of war and peace? since, by the force of an English interest and influence, we cannot fail of being engaged in every war, and neglected in every peace.

By this limitation, our parliament will become the most uncorrupted senate of all Europe. No man will be tempted to vote against the interest of his country, when his country shall have all the bribes in her own hands; offices, places, pensions. It will

will be no longer necessary to lose one half of the public customs, that parliament-men may be made collectors. We will not desire to exclude the officers of state from sitting in this house, when the country shall have the nomination of them; and our parliaments, free from corruption, cannot fail to redress all our grievances. We shall then have no cause to fear a refusal of the royal assent to our acts; for we shall have no evil counsellor, nor enemy of his country, to advise it. When this condition of government shall take place, the royal assent will be the ornament of the prince, and never be refused to the desires of the people. A general unanimity will be found in this house, in every part of the government, and among all ranks and conditions of men. The distinctions of court and country

party shall no more be heard in this nation; nor shall the prince and people any longer have a different interest. Rewards and punishments will be in the hands of those who live among us, and consequently best know the merit of men; by which means, virtue will be recompensed, and vice discouraged, and the reign and government of the prince will flourish in peace and justice.

I should never make an end, if I should prosecute all the great advantages of this limitation; which, like a divine influence, turns all to good, as the want of it has hitherto poisoned every thing, and brought all to ruin. I shall therefore only add one particular more, in which it will be of the highest advantage to this nation. We all know, that the only way of enslaving a people is by keeping up a stand-

P-

ing

ing army; that by standing forces all limited monarchies have been destroyed; without them none; that so long as any standing forces are allowed in a nation, pretexts will never be wanting to increase them; that princes have never suffered militias to be put upon any good foot, lest standing forces should appear unnecessary. We also know that a good and well-regulated militia is of so great importance to a nation, as to be the principal part of the constitution of any free government. Now, by this limitation, the nation will have a sufficient power to render their militia good and effectual, by the nomination of officers: and if we would send a certain proportion of our militia abroad yearly, and relieve them from time to time, we may make them as good as those of Switzerland are; and much more
able

able to defend the country, than any unactive standing forces can be. We may save every year great sums of money, which are now expended to maintain a standing army, and, which is yet more, run no hazard of losing our liberty by them. We may employ a greater number of officers in those detachments, than we do at present in all our forces both at home and abroad ; and make better conditions for them in those countries that need their assistance. For being freed from the influences of English councils, we shall certainly look better than we have hitherto done to the terms on which we may send them into the armies either of England or Holland ; and not permit them to be abused so many different ways, as, to the great reproach of the nation, they have been, in their rank, pay, cloth-

ing, arrears, levy-money, quarters, transport-ships, and gratuities.

Having thus shewn some of the great advantages this limitation will bring to the nation (to which every one of you will be able to add many more); that it is not only consistent with monarchy, but even with an absolute monarchy: having demonstrated the necessity of such a condition in all empires, which contain several kingdoms; and that without it we must for ever continue in a dependence upon the court of England; in the name of God, what hinders us from embracing so great a blessing? Is it because her majesty will refuse the royal assent to this act? If she do, sure I am, such a refusal must proceed from the advice of English counsellors; and will not that be a demonstration to us, that after her majesty,

majesty, and heirs of her body, we must not, cannot any longer continue under the same prince with England? Shall we be wanting to ourselves? Can her majesty give her assent to this limitation upon a successor before you offer it to her? Is she at liberty to give us satisfaction in this point, till we have declared to England, by a vote of this house, that unless we obtain this condition, we will not name the successor with them? And then will not her majesty, even by English advice, be persuaded to give her assent; unless her counsellors shall think fit to incur the heavy imputation, and run the dangerous risk, of dividing these nations for ever? If therefore either reason, honour, or conscience, have any influence upon us; if we have any regard either to ourselves or posterity; if there be any

such thing as virtue, happiness, or reputation in this world, or felicity in a future state, let me adjure you by all these not to draw upon your heads everlasting infamy, attended with the eternal reproaches and anguish of an evil conscience, by making yourselves and your posterity miserable.

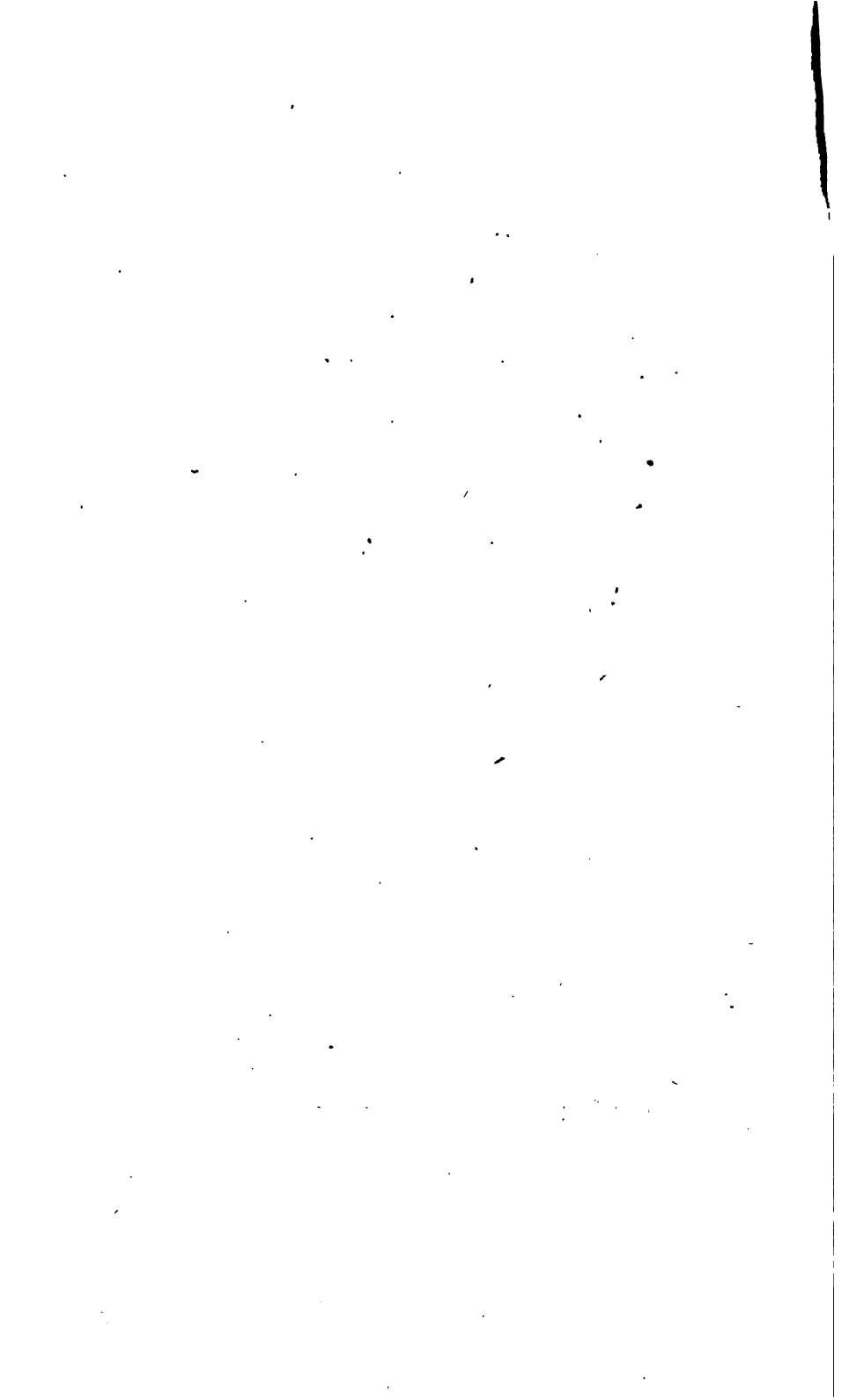
E S S A Y
O N T H E
G E N I U S , C H A R A C T E R , A N D W R I T I N G S
O F
J A M E S T H O M S O N
T H E P O E T .

Intended as a Basis for writing properly the Life of
that truly excellent Man.

By DAVID STUART, EARL OF BUCHAN.

To the Shade of Thomson.

If Britain, pallied, cannot feel these lays
Warm in the heart, and bursting forth thy praise,
Me from Boeotia let the fates convey,
Or death remove me to a brighter day ;
To scenes exalted, where the noble souls
Of men like thee no servile court controuls ;
Scenes where the good no modest worth conceals,
And where no praise the worthless coxcomb steals !



ESSAY, &c.

POETRY, that divine energy (for I cannot call it art) which lifts the man of clay from the dirty world he inhabits to the regions of fancy, is a gift of Heaven, and, like all her gifts, is inimitable, and difficult to be described.

In the philosophical, or as I would rather choose to call it, original language of the Greeks, it is expressed by a vocable descriptive of its power, which is creation.

In the Gothic, and all its derivatives in all languages approaching to originality, the name is synonymous. In old English
and

and Scottish it is called *making*, and poets were denominated makers.

It is my purpose in the following Essay to honour and describe the chief maker of Scotland; to shew the superiority of his genius, to do justice to his character as a man, and to illustrate his merit as an author, by exhibiting examples of them all.

I shall begin with a quotation from Samuel Johnson's Preface to Thomson's Poems, because it is well expressed, and will furnish a good text for illustrating the genius of the poet; though it is evident from Johnson's verses, that he himself was very far from being a maker.

In the counterpoint (as I may call it) of poetry he was a master; but of the grounds and melodies he was incapable.

What

What then is *taste*, but the internal powers
 Active, and strong, and feelingly alive
 To each fine impulse? a discerning sense
 Of decent and sublime, with quick disgust
 From things deform'd, or disarranged, or gross
 In species? This, nor gems, nor stores of gold,
 Nor purple state, *nor culture* can bestow;
 But God alone, when first his active hand
 Imprints the secret bias of the soul.

Pleasures of the Imag. b. iii. v. 515.

“ Thomson’s mode of thinking and of expressing his thoughts (writes Johnson) is original. His blank verse is no more the blank verse of Milton, or of any other poet, than the rhymes of Prior are the rhymes of Cowley. His numbers, his pauses, his diction, are of his own growth, without transcription, without imitation. He thinks in a peculiar train, and he thinks always as a man of genius; he looks round on nature and on life with the eye which na-

ture bestows only on a poet; the eye that distinguishes, in every thing presented to its view, whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained, and with a mind that at once comprehends the vast, and attends to the minute.

“The reader of the Seasons wonders that he never saw before what Thomson shews him, and that he never yet has felt what Thomson impresses.”

It was emphatically said by the greatest of men to his audience, when he was explaining the vital principles of holiness, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear!” So it is needless to muster up a legion of words to infuse the knowledge of what constitutes a genuine poet. The genius of a poet will bear witness to itself. Poetry is the flower of sentiment, and music is its odour; so that what is said of the one is proportionably applicable to the other;

other; and Rousseau's description of genius in music will be found equally just in the one as in the other. "Seek not to know what is genius; if thou hast it, thy feelings will tell thee what it is; if thou hast it not, thou never wilt know it."—&c.

Yet as the chaste enjoyment of beauty, and the just perception of the symmetry and picturesque perfection of nature, is in the highest degree conducive to the sense and practice of virtue, it is of high moment to enquire what kind of culture is most friendly to the attainment of taste, which is the handmaid of genius.

May it not be rationally supposed, that, without any predisposing circumstances in the bodily frame, a child will receive the impressions that are most conducive to that glorious combination of them

(which, when matured to permanent thought, we call genius) in the country, more readily than in towns or villages, where every thing is too complex for their understanding?

Will not an education less artificial, and tending more to spontaneous contemplation of natural objects, be more favourable to its attainment than the contrary? And would it not be proper to allow children to feed more upon their own thoughts than on the thoughts and instructions of others?

Would it not be better to have less mystery and technical institution in infancy and youth, and more natural knowledge and sentiment than we see exhibited in schools and private tuition? And lastly, would it not be better to bestow more time in forming philosophers and citizens, than

than in training up schoolmasters and milliners?—But here I stop. Thomson passed his infancy and early youth in the picturesque and pastoral country of Tiviotdale in Scotland, which is full of the elements of natural beauty, wood, water, eminence and rock, with intermixture of rich and beautiful meadow. The horizon was bounded by the Cheviot, a land of song and of heroic achievement; the venerable ruins of Jedburgh, Dryburgh, Kelso, and Melrose, were at hand, to add suitable impressions to the whole.

His mother had been well educated, was a woman of uncommon sensibility, and endowed with sublime affections.

He was cherished by Sir William Bennet, at Chesters, near Jedburgh, the most accomplished country gentleman in that part of Scotland. Every thing undoubtedly

doubtedly conspired to attune the genius of Thomson to sentiment and song.

“ He ask’d no more than simple nature gave,
 “ He lov’d the mountains, and enjoy’d their storms;
 “ No false desires, no pride-created wants
 “ Disturb’d the peaceful current of his time,
 “ And through the restless, ever-tortur’d maze
 “ Of pleasure or ambition, bid it rage.”

It is believed that, at Dryburgh, with Mr. Haliburton, of New-mains, a friend of his father’s, he first tuned his Doric reed, to which he alludes in his Autumn :

“ Wash’d lovely from the Tweed (pure parent stream),
 “ Whose pastoral banks first heard my Doric reed.

Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto (too), afterwards Lord Justice Clerk, a man of elegant taste, was kind to young Thomson.

Thomson sent him a copy of the first edition of his Seasons, which Sir Gilbert shewing

shewing to a relation of the poet's who was gardener at Minto, he took the book, which was finely bound, into his hands, and having turned it round and round, and gazed on it for some time, Sir Gilbert said to him, "Well, David, what do you think of James Thomson now? There's a book that will make him famous all over the world, and his name immortal!" "Indeed, Sir," said David, "that is a grand book! I did not think the lad had had ingenuity enough to have done such a neat piece of handicraft."

Striking example of the effects of situation and culture upon taste and sentiment!

That Thomson's youth was respectable appears from the countenance he

Q

received

received from Messrs. Riccalton and Gusthart ; and the continued attentions of the latter to the children of Mrs. Thomson reflect honour upon his memory, and excite sentiments in the feeling heart that deserve to be meditated and revolved : and I hope I am not writing for Chinese pedlars, with steel-yards at their button-holes, but to men and women who have still something in them that preceded the corruption of our commonwealth !

Thomson, having been encouraged by Lady Grizel Baillie to try his fortunes in London, embarked at Leith in the autumn of the year 1725, bedewed with the tears of his amiable and affectionate mother, the heart-felt recollection of which produced on her death, which happened not long after, the following unpremeditated
but

but beautiful verses, which, though not prepared for the press, I have given from a copy in the author's own hand-writing.

ON THE DEATH OF HIS MOTHER *.

From an original, in the Poet's own hand-writing, in the collection of the Earl of Buchan.

YE fabled muses, I your aid disclaim,
Your airy raptures, and your fancied flame :
True genuine woe my throbbing breast inspires,
Love prompts my lays, and filial duty fires ;
The soul springs instant at the warm design,
And the heart dictates every flowing line.
See ! where the kindest, best of mothers lies,
And death has shut her ever-weeping eyes ;
Has lodg'd at last peace in her weary breast,
And lull'd her many piercing cares to rest.
No more the orphan train around her stands,
While her full heart upbraids her needy hands !

* Elizabeth Trotter, of a genteel family in the neighbourhood of Greenlaw in Berwickshire.

No more the widow's lonely fate she feels,
The shock severe that modest want conceals,
Th' oppressor's scourge, the scorn of wealthy pride,
And poverty's unnumber'd ills beside.

For see ! attended by th' angelic throng,
Through yonder worlds of light she glides along,
And claims the well earn'd raptures of the sky.—

Yet fond concern recalls the mother's eye ;
She seeks the helpless orphans left behind ;
So hardly left ! so bitterly resign'd !

Still, still ! is she my soul's divinest theme,
The waking vision, and the wailing dream :

Amid the ruddy sun's enliv'ning blaze
O'er my dark eyes her dewy image plays,
And in the dread dominion of the night
Shines out again the sadly pleasing sight.

Triumphant virtue all around her darts,
And more than volumes ev'ry look imparts—
Looks, soft, yet awful, melting, yet serene,
Where both the mother and the saint are seen.

But ah ! that night—that torturing night remains ;
May darkness dye it with its deepest stains,
May joy on it forsake her rosy bow'rs,
And screaming sorrow blast its baleful hours,

When

When on the margin of the briny flood *
 Chill'd with a sad prefaging damp I stood,
 Took the last look, ne'er to behold her more,
 And mix'd our murmurs with the wavy roar,
 Heard the last words fall from her pious tongue,
 Then, wild into the bulging vessel flung,
 Which soon, too soon convey'd me from *her* sight
 Dearer than life, and liberty and light !
 Why was I then, ye powers, reserv'd for this ?
 Nor sunk that moment in the vast abyss ?
 Devour'd at once by the relentless wave,
 And whelm'd for ever in a wat'ry grave ?—
 Down, ye wild wishes of unruly woe !—
 I see her with immortal beauty glow,
 The early wrinkle care-contracted gone,
 Her tears all wiped, and all her sorrows flown ;
 Th' exalting voice of Heav'n I hear her breathe,
 To sooth her soul in agonies of death.
 I see her through the mansions blest above,
 And now she meets her dear expecting love.
 Heart-cheering sight ! but yet, alas ! o'erspread
 By the damp gloom of Grief's uncheerful shade,

* On the shore of Leith, when he embarked for
 London.

Come then of reason the reflecting hour,
 And let me trust the kind o'er-ruling Power,
 Who from the right commands the shining day,
 The poor man's portion, and the orphan's stay !

THOMSON'S ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF AIKMAN, THE
 PAINTER *.

*From a MS. of the Author's own hand-writing in the
 collection of the Earl of Buchan.*

OH could I draw, my friend, thy genuine mind,
 Just, as the living forms by thee design'd,
 Of Raphael's figures none should fairer shine,
 Nor Titian's colours longer last than mine.

A mind

* Mr. Aikman died at London, on the 7th of June, O. S. 1731, from whence his remains were sent to Scotland, and interred in the Gray-Friars church-yard, close by those of his only son, who had been buried only a few months before.

Mr. Aikman was the son of William Aikman of Cairny, Esq. (sheriff depute of Forfarshire, a lawyer of eminence,
 and

A mind in wisdom old, in lenience young,
 From fervent truth where every virtue sprung;
 Where all was real, modest, plain, sincere;
 Worth above show, and goodness unfevered:
 View'd round and round, as lucid diamonds throw
 Still as you turn them a revolving glow;
 So did his mind reflect with secret ray,
 In various virtues, heav'n's internal day,
 Whether in high discourse it soar'd sublime,
 And sprung impatient o'er the bounds of Time,

and in nomination for a judge's gown at the time of his death) by Margaret, sister of Sir John Clerk of Pennycuik, Baronet.

He was born on the 24th of October 1682, and was educated by his parents with great care, and destined for the profession of the law. Nature thought fit to destine and fit him for another more elegant, not less liberal, and certainly much more delightful. He went to Italy in the year 1705, and returned to Britain in 1710, not only a good painter, but an accomplished and agreeable man.

In the Gothic reigns of George I. and II. he could look for nothing but money for starch heads and periwigs, and starch heads and periwigs was he forced to delineate and paint till his dying day. O che sciagura!

Or wand'ring nature through with raptur'd eye,
 Ador'd the hand that turn'd yon azure sky :
 Whether to social life he bent his thought,
 And the right poise of mingling passions fought,
 Gay converse blest'd ; or in the thoughtful grove
 Bid the heart open every source of love.
 New varying lights still set before your eyes
 The just, the good, the social, or the wise.
 For such a death who can, who would, refuse
 The friend a tear, a verse the mournful muse ?
 Yet pay we just acknowledgment to Heaven,
 Though snatch'd so soon, that Aikman e'er was
 given.

*A friend, when dead, is but remov'd from sight,
 Hid in the lustre of eternal light :
 Oft with the mind he wonted converse keeps
 In the lone walk, or when the body sleeps
 Lets in a wand'ring ray, and all elate
 Wings and attracts her to another state * ;
 And when the parting storms of life are o'er,
 May yet rejoin him on a happier shore.*

* This and the three preceding lines are not in the MS. of Mrs. Forbes Aikman.

As those we love decay, we die in part,
 String after string is sever'd from the heart;
 Till loosen'd life at last—but breathing clay,
 Without one pang, is glad to fall away.
 Unhappy he who latest feels the blow,
 Whose eyes have wept o'er ev'ry friend laid low,
 Dragg'd ling'ring on from partial death to death,
 And dying, all he can resign is breath.

SONG WRITTEN IN HIS EARLY YEARS, AND AFTER-
 WARDS SHAPED FOR HIS AMANDA.

From a MS. in the collection of the Earl of Buchan.

FOR ever, Fortune, wilt thou prove
 An unrelenting foe to love;
 And when we meet a mutual heart,
 Come in between and bid us part;
 Bid us sigh on from day to day,
 And wish and wish the soul away;
 Till youth and genial years are flown,
 And all the life of life is gone?
 But busy busy still art thou,
 To bind the loveless joyless vow,

The

The heart from pleasure to delude,
 And join the gentle to the rude * ;
 For pomp, and noise, and senseless show,
 To make us nature's joys forego,
 Beneath a gay dominion groan,
 And put the golden fetter on !

TO DR. DE LA COUR, in IRELAND.

On his Prospect of Poetry.

HAIL gently-warbling De la Cour, whose fame,
 Spurning Hibernia's solitary coast,
 Where small rewards attend the tuneful throng,
 Pervades Britannia's well-discerning isle :
 In spite of all the gloomy-minded tribe
 That would eclipse thy fame, still shall the muse,
 High soaring o'er the tall Parnassian mount

* For once, O Fortune ! hear my prayer,
 And I absolve thy future care :
 All other blessings I resign,
 Make but the dear Amanda mine !

The original of this also, as prepared for his mistress,
 is in Lord Buchan's possession.

With

With spreading pinions—sing thy wondrous praise,
In strains attun'd to the seraphic lyre.

Sing unappall'd, though mighty be the theme!

O! could she in thy own harmonious strain,

Where softest numbers smoothly flowing glide

In trickling cadence; where the milky maze

Devolves in silence; by the harsher sound

Of hoarser periods still unruffled, could

Her lines but like thine own Euphrates flow—

Then might she sing in numbers worthy thee.

But what can language do, when Fancy finds

Herself unequal to the lovely task?

Can feeble words thy vivid colours paint,

Or shew the sweets which inexhaustive flow?

Hearken ye woods, and long-resounding groves;

Listen ye streams, soft purling thro' the meads,

And hymning horrid, all ye tempests roar.

Awake, ye woodlands! sing, ye warbling larks,

In wildly luscious notes! But most of all,

Attend, ye grateful fair, attend the youth

Who sweetly sings of nature and of you:

From you alone his conscious breast expects

Its soft rewards, by fordid love of gain

Unbias'd, undebas'd; to meaner minds

Belong

Belong such narrow views; his nobler soul,
Transported with a gen'rous thirst of fame,
Sublimely rises with expanded wings,
And through the lucid empyrean soars.
So the young eagle wings its rapid way
Thro' heaven's broad azure; sometimes springs aloft,
Now drops, now cleaves with even-waving wings
The yielding air, nor seas nor mountains stop
Its flight impetuous, gazing at the sun
With irretorted eye, whilst he pervades
A trackless void, and unexplor'd before.
Long had the curious traveller strove to find
The ruins of aspiring Babylon—
In vain—for nought the nicest eye could trace
Save one wide, wat'ry, undistinguish'd waste:
But you with more than magic art have rais'd
Semiramis's city from its grave;
You have revers'd the scripture curse, which said,
Dragons shall here inhabit; in your page
We view the rising spires; the hurried eye
Distracted wanders through the verdant maze;
In middle air the pendent gardens hang,
Tremendous ceiling!—whilst no solar beam
Falls on the lengthen'd gloom beneath; the woods
Project

Project above a steep-alluring shade ;
 The finish'd garden opens to the view
 Wide-stretching vistas, while the whisp'ring wind
 Dimples along the breezy-ruffled lake.

Now every tree irregular, and busts
 Are prodigal of harmony : the birds
 Frequent th' ærial wood, and nature blushes,
 Asham'd to find herself outdone by art :
 These and a thousand beauties could I sing,
 Collecting like the ever-toiling bee
 From yonder mingled wilderness of flow'rs
 The aromatic sweets ; while you, great youth !
 O'er thy decaying country chief preside ;
 Be thou her genius call'd, inspire her youth
 With noble emulation to arrive
 At Helicon's fair font, which few, alas !
 Save you, have tasted of Hibernian youth.
 Thy country, tho' corrupted, brought thee forth,
 And deem'd her greatest ornament ; and now
 Regards thee as her brightest northern star.
 Long may you reign as such ; and should grim Time,
 With iron teeth, deprive us of our Pope,
 Then we'll transplant thy blooming laurels fresh
 From your bleak shore to Albion's happier coast.

Thomson's

Thomson's Letter to Mr. George Ross.*

London, November 6th, 1736.

DEAR ROSS,

I OWN I have a good deal of assurance, after asking one favour of you, never to answer your letter till I ask another. But not to mince the matter, and all apologies apart, hearken to my request—My sisters have been advised by their friends to set up at Edinburgh a little milliner's shop; and if you can conveniently advance to them twelve pounds, on my account, it will be a particular favour. That will set them a-going, and I design from time to time to send them goods from hence. My whole account I will pay you when you come up here, not in poetical paper

* From an original in Lord Buchan's collection.
credit,

credit, but in the solid money of this dirty world. I will not draw upon you, in case you be not prepared to defend yourself; but if your purse be valiant, please to enquire for Jean or Elizabeth Thomson, at the Reverend Mr. Gusthart's; and if this letter be not a sufficient testimony of the debt, I will send you whatever you desire.

It is late, and I would not lose this post. Like a laconic man of business, therefore, I must here stop short; though I have several things to impart to you, and, through your canal, to the dearest, truest, heartiest youth that treads on Scottish ground. The next letter I write you shall be washed clean from business in the Castalian fountain.

I am whipping and spurring to finish a tragedy for you this winter, but am

still

still at some distance from the goal, which makes me fear being distanced. Remember me to all friends, and above them all to Mr. Forbes. Though my affection to him is not fanned by letters, yet is it as high as when I was his brother in the virtù, and played at chess with him in a post-chaise.

I am, dear Rofs,

Most sincerely and affectionately yours,

JAMES THOMSON.

Thomson to Mr. George Rofs.

London, Jan. 12, 1737.

DEAR SIR,

HAVING been entirely in the country of late, finishing my play, I did not receive yours till some days ago. It was kind in you not to draw rashly upon me, which at present had put me into danger:
but

but very soon (that is to say, about two months hence) I shall have a golden buckler, and you may draw boldly.—My play* is received in Drury-lane play-house, and will be put into my lord chamberlain's or his deputy's hands to-morrow.—May we hope to see you this winter, and to have the assistance of your hands, in case it is acted? What will become of you? I am afraid the *creepy*† and you will be acquainted.—Forbes, I hope, is cheerful, and in good health. Shall we never see him? or shall I go to him before he comes to us? I long to see him, in order to play out that game of chess which we left unfinished. Remember me kindly to him, with all the

* Agamemnon.

† Stool, used in the Scotch churches for doing penance.

zealous truth of old friendship. Pettie * came here two or three days ago : I have not yet seen the round man of God to be. He is to be parsonified a few days hence.—How a gown and cassock will become him ! and with what a holy leer he will edify the devout females ! There is no doubt of his having a call ; for he is immediately to enter upon a tolerable living. God grant him more, and as fat as himself. It rejoices me to see one worthy, honest, excellent man raised, at least to an independency. Pray make

* Rev. Mr. Patrick Murdoch, the oily man of God of the Castle of Indolence.

“ A little, round, fat, oily man of God,

“ Was one I chiefly mark’d among the fry;

“ He had a roguish twinkle in his eye,

“ And shone all glittering with unholy dew,

“ If a tight damsel chaunc’d to trippen by.”

my compliments to my Lord President* and all friends. I shall be glad to hear more at large from you. Just now I am with the alderman, who wishes you all happiness, and desires his service to Jock. Believe me to be

Ever most affectionately yours,
JAMES THOMSON.

*Thomson to Mr. Lyttelton, afterwards
Lord Lyttelton.*

London, July 14th, 1743.

DEAR SIR,

I HAD the pleasure of yours some posts ago, and have delayed answering it hitherto, that I might be able to determine when I could have the happiness of waiting upon you.

Hagley is the place in England I most desire to see; I imagine it to be greatly

* President Forbes.

delightful in itself, and I know it to be so to the highest degree by the company it is animated with.

Some reasons prevent my waiting upon you immediately; but if you will be so good as let me know how long you design to stay in the country, nothing shall hinder me from passing three weeks or a month with you before you leave it. As this will fall in autumn, I shall like it the better, for I think that season of the year the most pleasing, and the most poetical. The spirits are not then dissipated with the gaiety of spring, and the glaring light of summer, but composed into a serious and tempered joy.—The year is perfect. In the mean time I will go on with correcting the Seasons, and hope to carry down more than one of them with me. The muses, whom you obligingly say I shall bring along with me,

me, I shall find with you—the muses of the great simple country, not the little fine-lady muses of Richmond-hill.

I have lived so long in the noise, or at least the distant din of the town, that I begin to forget what retirement is: with you I shall enjoy it in its highest elegance, and purest simplicity. The mind will not only be soothed into peace, but enlivened into harmony. My compliments attend all at Hagley, and particularly her* who gives it charms to you it never had before.

Believe me to be ever,

With the greatest respect,

Most affectionately yours,

JAMES THOMSON.

* Lucy Fortescue, daughter of Hugh Fortescue, Esq. of Filleigh, in the county of Devon, married

*Thomson's Letter to his Sister, Mrs. Jean
Thomson, at Lanark.*

Hagley, in Worcestershire,

October 4th, 1747.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I THOUGHT you had known me
better than to interpret my silence into a
decay

to Mr. Lyttelton in the year 1742, whose amiable qualities, exemplary conduct, and uniform practice of religion and virtue, rendered her the delight and regret of all her acquaintance. She died in the beginning of the year 1746, in the 29th year of her age, leaving her husband one son, Thomas, the late Lord Lyttelton, and a daughter, Lucy, married in the year 1765 to Lord Valentia. Who has not seen and wept over the beautiful monody consecrated to her memory by the good Lord Lyttelton? If there is a living soul that has read it without emotion, I envy not their condition upon a throne.

It

decay of affection, especially as your behaviour has always been such as rather to increase than to diminish it. Don't imagine, because I am a bad correspondent, that I can ever prove an unkind friend and brother. I must do myself the justice to

It is full of every thing that gives dignity to man.
Her epitaph at Hagley is less known.—

“ Made to engage all hearts, and charm all eyes,

“ Tho' meek, magnanimous ; tho' witty, wife :

“ Polite, as all her life in courts had been ;

“ Yet good, as she the world had never seen :

“ The noble fire of an exalted mind

“ With gentlest female tenderness combin'd.

“ Her speech was the melodious voice of love ;

“ Her song, the warbling of the vernal grove ;

“ Her eloquence was sweeter than her song,

“ Soft as her heart, and as her reason strong.

“ Her form each beauty of her mind express'd ;

“ Her mind was virtue, by the Graces dress'd.

tell

tell you, that my affections are naturally very fixed and constant; and if I had ever reason of complaint against you (of which, by the bye, I have not the least shadow), I am conscious of so many defects in myself, as dispose me to be not a little charitable and forgiving.

It gives me the truest heartfelt satisfaction to hear you have a good kind husband, and are in easy contented circumstances: but were they otherwise, that would only awaken and heighten my tenderness towards you. As our good and tender-hearted parents did not live to receive any material testimonies of that highest human gratitude I owed them (than which nothing could have given me more pleasure), the only return I can make them now, is by kindness to those
they

they left behind them. Would to God poor Lizzy* had lived longer, to be a farther witness of the truth of what I say, and that I might have had the pleasure of seeing

* Elizabeth, married to Mr. Bell, mother of the present Dr. Bell, rector of the parish of Coldstream, in Berwickshire, a gentleman who possesses much of the worth and genius of his uncle, and who is now employed in preparing a new and collated edition of Thomson's Works, with a more correct account of his life than has hitherto appeared; in which pious work I have done myself the honour to afford some little assistance in the collection of materials. To this edition it is proposed to prefix an engraving from the poet's bust in Westminster Abbey, and another from the sketch of a monument drawn by Mr. Hicky, which was transmitted to the Earl of Buchan by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

The text of this new edition for the Seasons is intended to be that in 4to. of the year 1730, in which Autumn made its first appearance: the additions

seeing once more a sister who so truly deserved my esteem and love. But she is happy, while we must toil a little longer here below: let us however do it cheerfully and gratefully, supported by the pleasing hope of meeting yet again on a safer shore, where to recollect the storms and difficulties of life will not perhaps be inconsistent with that blissful state. You did right to call your daughter by her name, for you must needs have had a

tions and alterations to be printed in italics. The following is a statement of the additional lines made to the Seasons after that edition:

	lines
To Spring - -	85
Summer - -	599
Autumn - -	96
Winter - -	188
	968

particular

particular tender friendship for one another, endeared as you were by nature, by having passed the affectionate years of your youth together, and by that great softener and engager of hearts, mutual hardship. That it was in my power to ease it a little, I account one of the most exquisite pleasures of my life.—But enough of this melancholy, though not unpleasant strain.

I esteem you for your sensible and disinterested advice to Mr. Bell, as you will see by my letter to him : as I approve entirely of his marrying again, you may readily ask me, why I don't marry at all ? My circumstances have hitherto been so variable and uncertain in this fluctuating world, as induce to keep me from engaging in such a state ; and now, though they are more settled, and of late (which
you

you will be glad to hear) considerably improved, I begin to think myself too far advanced in life for such youthful undertakings, not to mention some other petty reasons that are apt to startle the delicacy of difficult old bachelors. I am, however, not a little suspicious, that was I to pay a visit to Scotland (which I have some thoughts of doing soon), I might possibly be tempted to think of a thing not easily repaired if done amiss. *I have always been of opinion, that none make better wives than the ladies of Scotland*; and yet who more forsaken than they, while the gentlemen are continually running abroad all the world over? Some of them, it is true, are wise enough to return for a wife.—You see I am beginning to make interest already with the Scots ladies. But no more of this infectious subject.—Pray let

me hear from you now and then; and though I am not a regular correspondent, yet perhaps I may mend in that respect. Remember me kindly to your husband *, and believe me to be

Your most affectionate brother,

JAMES THOMSON.

(Addressed) To Mrs. Thomson, in Lanark.

BUT

* Mr. Thomson was rector of the grammar school at Lanark, and from him, or Mrs. Thomson, Mr. Boswell obtained a copy of the original of this letter, which original is now in the possession of Mr. James Craig, architect, Thomson's youngest sister's son, who is likewise possessed of copies of Thomson's juvenile poems, of his snuff-box, and seal of arms, which hung at his watch, and of his original portrait painted by Hudson, for Mr. Millar, the bookseller, which was presented to him by Lady Grant, first married to that worthy friend of the poet's,

BUT the highest encomium of Thomson is to be given him on account of his attachment to the cause of political and civil liberty. A free constitution of government, or what I would beg leave to call the *autocracy* of the people, is the panacea of moral diseases, and after having been sought for in vain for ages, has been discovered in the bosom of truth, on the right hand of common sense, and at the feet of philosophy; the printing press has been the dispensary, and half the world

poet's, and was a daughter of Johnson, the engraver to the Bank of Scotland.

Lord Buchan presented to Mr. Craig the plaster of Paris cast of the bust of Thomson, which was intended to have been crowned on Ednam-Hill, and he gave a sketch for a monument to the memory of his uncle for that conspicuous situation.

have

have become voluntary patients of this healing remedy.

It is glorious for Thomson's memory that he should have described the platform of a perfect government, as Milton described the platform of a perfect garden—the one in the midst of Gothic institutions of feudal origin, and the other in the midst of clipped yews and spouting lions.

Eighteen years after Thomson's death the late Lord Chatham agreed with me in making this remark; and when I said, "But, Sir, what will become of poor England, that doats on the imperfections of her pretended constitution?" he replied, "My dear Lord, the gout will dispose of me soon enough to prevent me from feeling the consequences of this infatuation: but before the end of this century either the parliament will reform itself from within,

within, or be reformed with a vengeance from without." Pythonick speech, speedily to be verified !

" Should then the times arrive (which Heaven avert !)
 " That Britons bend unnerv'd, not by the force
 " Of arms, more generous, and more manly, quell'd,
 " But by *corruption's* soul-dejecting arts,
 " Arts impudent, and gross ! by *their own* gold,
 " In part bestow'd to bribe them to give all :
 " With party raging, or immers'd in sloth,
 " Should *shameless pens* for sly corruption plead ;
 " The hired assassins of the commonweal !
 " That nation shall another Carthage be."

Britons ! be firm !—nor let corruption fly
 Twine round your hearts indissoluble chains !
 The steel of Brutus burst the grosser bonds
 By Cæsar cast o'er Rome ; but still remain'd
 The soft enchanting fetters of the mind,
 And *other Cæsars* rose. Determin'd hold
 Your INDEPENDANCE ; for, *that* once destroy'd,
 Unfounded,

Unfounded, FREEDOM is a morning dream,
That flits ærial from the spreading eye.

No wonder that, when the brutal Johnson tried to read liberty when it first appeared, he soon desisted, when Johnson's countrymen try to read France's liberty, and desist!

"Pudet hæc opprobria nobis, et dici potuisse,

"Et non potuisse refelli!

Though I have not the transcendent honour of being a member of the British parliament, let not the powerful despise my sayings—I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness of politics—*Make straight your ways, for the empire of delusion is at an end.*

*Thomson to Mr. Paterfon, of the Leeward
Islands*.*

DEAR PATERSON,

IN the first place, and previously to my letter, I must recommend to your favour and protection, Mr. James Smith, searcher

* Mr. Paterfon, a companion of Thomson, afterwards his deputy as surveyor general of the Leeward Islands, and his successor in the office, used to write out fair copies of his works, several of which are in my collection. This gentleman, as Murdoch informs us, courted the Tragic Muse, and wrote a piece in that line, with Arminius for its hero.

When he presented it to the manager of Drury-lane play-house, the hand-writing of Edward and Eleonora being immediately recognised, it was scouted, and he was glad to sell it for a trifle to a good-natured bookfeller.

Murdoch's Life of Thomson.

in

in St. Christopher's, and I beg of you, as occasion shall serve, and as you find he merits it, to advance him in the business of the customs. He is warmly recommended to me by Sargent, who in verity turns out one of the best men of our youthful acquaintance, honest, honourable, friendly, and generous.—If we are not to oblige one another, life becomes a paltry selfish affair, a pitiful morsel in a corner! Sargent is so happily married, that I could almost say, the same case happen to us all.

That I have not answered several letters of yours, is not owing to the want of friendship, and the sincerest regard for you; but you know me well enough to account for my silence, without my saying any more upon that head; besides, I have very little to say, that is worthy to

be transmitted over the great ocean. The world either futilises* so much, or we grow so dead to it, that its transactions make but a feeble impression on us. † Retirement and nature are more and more my passion every day; and now, even now, the charming time comes on: heaven is just upon the point, or rather in the very act, of giving earth a green gown. The voice of the nightingale is heard in our lane ‡.

You

* A verb coined by Thomson from the adjective futile.

† On this account it has been suggested, that the most proper monument for Thomson would be a modest Doric portico, adjoining to a cottage stored with the best books on natural history, to be kept by some of the poet's poor relations, with a salary.

‡ The bird-catchers about London generally observe the song of the nightingale in the first or
second

You must know that I have enlarged my rural domain much to the same dimensions you have done yours—the two fields next to me ; from the first of which I have walled—no, no,—paled in about as much as my garden consisted of before ; so that the walk runs round the hedge, where you may figure me walking any time of the day, and sometimes under night. For you, I imagine you reclining under cedars and palmettos, and there enjoying more magnificent slumbers than are known to the pale climates of the

second week of April. This letter of Thomson's having no date, it is impossible to determine exactly from circumstances when it was written ; but as the firing began at Maestricht in the first week, it may be guessed that the letter was written about the middle of the month, since he speaks in the close of the letter of the news of the siege being fresh.

north; slumbers rendered awful and divine, by the solemn stillness and deep fervors of the torrid noon. At other times I imagine you drinking punch in groves of lime or orange trees, gathering pine apples from hedges as commonly as we may blackberries, poetising under lofty laurels, or making love under full-spread myrtles.—But to lower my style a little—as I am such a genuine lover of gardening, why don't you remember me in that instance, and send me some seeds of things that might succeed here during the summer, though they cannot perfect their seeds sufficiently in this, to them, ungenial climate, to propagate?—in the which case is the calliloo; that, from the seed it bore here, produced plants puny, ricketty, and good for nothing. There are other things certainly with you, not yet

yet brought over hither, that might flourish here in the summer-time, and live tolerably well, provided they were sheltered during the winter in a green-house.

You will give me no small pleasure, by sending me, from time to time, some of these seeds, if it were no more than to amuse me in making the trial *.

* The amusements of Thomson were chiefly the contemplation of nature, the study of natural history as a science, voyages and travels, and the philosophy of civil history; of which last he has given an excellent specimen in his *Liberty*, as he has of the first in his *Seasons and Castle of Indolence*. Gardening, except in the stiff ornamental style of Holland, had made but little progress in England in the days of Thomson. There were no Curtises, Aytouns, or Forsythes, still less any Wheatlys or Walpoles. Philip Miller, the author of the *Gardener's Dictionary*, was almost the only man who could be of use to Thomson in his researches.

With regard to the brother gardeners, you ought to know, that, as they are half vegetables, the animal part of them will never have spirit enough to consent to the transplanting of the vegetable into distant dangerous climates: they, happily for themselves, have no other idea but to dig on here, eat, drink, sleep, and kiss their wives.

As to more important business, I have nothing to write to you. You know best the course of it. Be (as you always must be) just and honest; but if you are unhappily romantic, you shall come home without money, and write a tragedy on yourself. Mr. Lyttelton told me that the Grenvilles and he had strongly recommended the person the governor and you proposed for that considerable office, lately fallen vacant in your department, and that
there

there were good hopes of succeeding. He told me also that Mr. P. had said it was not to be expected that offices such as that is, for which the greatest interest is made here at home, could be accorded to your recommendation : but that, as to the middling or inferior offices, if there was not some particular reason to the contrary, regard would be had thereto. This is all that can be reasonably desired; and if you are not infected with a certain Creolean distemper (whereof I am persuaded your soul will utterly resist the contagion, as I hope your body will that of their natural ones), there are few men so capable of that unperishable happiness, that peace and satisfaction of mind that proceed from being reasonable and moderate in our desires, as you are. These are the treasures, dug from an inexhaustible mine in our own breasts ;
 which

which, like those in the kingdom of heaven, the rust of time cannot corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal. I must learn to work at this mine a little more, being struck off from a certain hundred pounds a year which you know I had. West, Mallet, and I were all routed in one day. If you would know why—out of resentment to our friend* in Argyll-street.

Yet

* George, afterwards Lord Lyttelton.—Whether we contemplate the character of this worthy man in public or private life, we are justified in affirming that he abounded in virtues not only sufficient to create reverence and esteem, but to excite the affectionate remembrance of all who had the honour and pleasure of his acquaintance. “His wit was nature by the Graces drest”——

“His was the large ambitious wish,

“To make men blest; the sigh for suffering worth

“Lost in obscurity; the noble scorn

“Of

Yet I have hopes given me of having it restored with interest, some time or other. Ah ! *that some time or other is a great deceiver*. Coriolanus has not yet appeared upon the stage, from the little dirty jealousy of Tullus *—I mean of him who was desired to act Tullus—towards him †

“ Of tyrant pride ; the fearless great resolve,

“ Th’ awaken’d throb for virtue and for fame,

“ The sympathies of love and friendship dear ;

“ With all the social offspring of the heart.”

* Garrick.

† Quin.—Those who wish to amuse themselves with the broils of the theatre may consult Davies’s Dramatic Miscellanies, and his Life of Garrick, for the campaigns (as the theatricals are pleased to call them) of the winters 47 and 48.—For my own part, I admire the great Frederick of Prussia, who coming to his concert, and finding the musicians quarrelling, exclaimed with a good-natured smile—“ Arrangez vous, coquins.”

who

who can alone act Coriolanus. Indeed, the first has entirely jockeyed the last off the stage for this season; but I believe he will return on him next season, like a giant in his wrath. Let us have a little more patience, Paterfon; nay, let us be cheerful. At last all will be well; at least all will be over—*here* I mean: God forbid it should be hereafter. But as sure as there is a God, that will not be so*. Now that I am prating of myself, know that after fourteen or fifteen years, the Castle of Indolence comes abroad in a

* It is pleasing to see the last expressions of the poet's confidence, that the form of the soul is eternal; that great spirits perish not with the body. There may be worthless vessels, and there may be vessels fitted for destruction; but of all that Heaven has endowed with feelings to enjoy it, nothing shall be lost, and the King of Heaven shall raise it up again at the last day!

fortnight *. It will certainly travel as far as Barbadoes. You have an apartment in it, as a night pensioner, which you may remember I filled up for you during our delightful party at North Ham. Will ever these days return again? Don't you remember your eating the raw fish that was never caught? All our friends are

* The Castle of Indolence is the finest poem of the kind in any language—worthy of the ripened taste of Thomson, and of a polished age.

O thou, whose genius, powerful yet refin'd,
 Whose bard-like virtues, and consummate skill
 To touch the finer springs that move the heart,
 Join'd to whate'er the Graces could bestow,
 And all Apollo's animating fire,
 Gave thee with pleasing dignity to shine
 At once the friend, the ornament, and joy
 Of Phœbus' sons—permit a rural muse,
 Thus in thy words to hail thy honour'd shade!
 Thus to proclaim thee to a downward age
 The friend of virtue, liberty, and love.

pretty

pretty much in statu quo, except it be poor Mr. Lyttelton. He has had the severest trial an humane tender heart can have*: but the old physician Time will at last close up his wounds, though there must always remain an inward smarting. Mitchel† is in the house for Aberdeenshire, and has spoken modestly well: I hope he will be in something else soon. None deserves better: true friendship and humanity dwell in his heart. Gray is working hard at passing his accounts. I spoke to him about that affair. If he

* The death of his Lucy.

† Sir Andrew Mitchel of Thainstown. Not a word of exaggeration. He was an excellent man. It is needless for me to attempt saying any thing about a man who was esteemed by Frederick the Great, and beloved by his acquaintance and relations.

gives

gives you any trouble about it, even that of dunning, I shall think of it strangely ; but I dare say he is too friendly to do it. He values himself justly upon being friendly to his old friends, and you are among the oldest. Symmer is at last tired of quality, and is going to take a semi-country house at Hammer-smith. I am sorry that honest sensible Warrender (who is in town) seems to be stunted in church preferment. He ought to be a tall cedar in the house of the Lord. If he is not so at last, it will add more fuel to my indignation, that burns already too intensely, and throbs towards an eruption. Peter Murdoch is in town, tutor to Admiral Vernon's son, and is in good hopes of another living in Suffolk, that country of tranquillity, where he will then burrow himself

himself in a wife and be happy. Good-natured obliging Millar is as usual.

Though the Doctor* increases in his
business,

* Doctor Armstrong.—Armstrong was a worthy man, a good physician, and perhaps one of the best scientific didactic poets in the world, as appears from his poem on the Art of preserving Health. Thomson has described his absent moods in the Castle of Indolence, in the tenth stanza:

“ With him was sometimes join’d in silent walk,
 “ (Profoundly silent, for they never spoke)
 “ One shyer still, who quite detested talk ;
 “ Oft stung by spleen, at once away he broke,
 “ To groves of pine, and broad o’ershadowing oak :
 “ There, inly thrill’d, he wander’d all alone,
 “ And on himself his pensive fury woke ;
 “ He never utter’d word, save when first shone
 “ The glittering star of eve—Thank Heaven ! the day
 is done.”

When the good Doctor was with the British army
in

business, he does not decrease in spleen ; but there is a certain kind of spleen, that is both humane and agreeable, like Jacques in the play. I sometimes have a touch of it.—But I must break off this chat with you about our friends, which, were I to indulge it, would be endless—As for politics—we are I believe upon the brink of a peace. The French at present are vapouring in the siege of Maestricht, at the same time they are mortally sick in their marine, and through all the vitals of France. It is a pity we cannot continue the war a little longer, and put their agonising trade quite to death. This siege,

in Flanders, as surgeon or physician, he was taken prisoner one day, taking what he called a stroll beyond the lines. I cannot but remember with high pleasure that worthy character. He died September 30, 1779, much regretted by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance.

T

I take

I take it, they mean as their last flourish in the war.—May your health, which never failed you yet, still continue, till you have scraped together enough to return home, and live in some snug corner, as happy as the Corycius Senex, in Virgil's fourth Georgic, whom I recommend both to you and myself as a perfect model of the truest happy life. Believe me to be ever most sincerely, and affectionately,

Yours, &c.

JAMES THOMSON.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THOMSON.

BY MR. COLLINS.

The Scene on the Thames near Richmond.

I.

IN yonder grave a Druid lies,
Where slowly winds the stealing wave;
The year's best sweets shall duteous rise
To deck its poet's sylvan grave.

II.

In yon deep bed of whisp'ring reeds
His airy harp!* shall now be laid,
That he, whose heart in sorrow bleeds,
May love thro' life the soothing shade.

III.

Then maids and youths shall linger here,
And while its sounds at distance swell,
Shall sadly seem in pity's ear
To hear the woodland pilgrim's knell.

* The Æolian harp.

IV.

Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore
When Thames in summer wreaths is drest,
And oft suspend the dashing oar,
To bid his gentle spirit rest !

V.

And oft, as ease and health retire
To breezy lawn, or forest deep,
The friend shall view yon whitening * spire,
And 'mid the varied landscape weep.

VI.

But thou, who own'st that earthy bed,
Ah ! what will every dirge avail ;
Or tears, which love and pity shed,
That mourn beneath the gliding sail !

VII.

Yet lives there one, whose heedless eye
Shall scorn thy pale shrine glimm'ring near ?

* Richmond church, where Thomson lies buried in the north-west corner of it, below the christening pew, without a tablet or memorial to say—Here Thomson lies.

With him, sweet bard, may fancy die,
And joy desert the blooming year.

VIII.

But thou, lorn stream, whose fullen tide
No sedge-crown'd sisters now attend,
Now waft me from the green hill's side,
Whose cold turf hides the buried friend !

IX.

And see, the fairy valleys fade,
Dun night has veil'd the solemn view :
Yet once again, dear parted shade,
Meek nature's child, again adieu !

X.

The genial meads assign'd to blefs
Thy life, shall mourn thy early doom ;
Their hinds and shepherd-girls shall dress
With simple hands thy rural tomb.

XI.

Long, long, thy stone and pointed clay
Shall melt the musing Briton's eyes :
O ! vales, and wild woods, shall he say,
In yonder grave your Druid lies.

THE REVEREND MR. WILLIAM THOMSON'S

(*Sometime of Queen's College, Oxford*)

ADDRESS TO THE SHADE OF THOMSON*.

HAIL, nature's poet ! whom she taught alone
To sing her works in numbers like her own :
Sweet as the thrush that warbles in the dale,
And soft as Philomela's tender tale.
She lent her pencil too, of wondrous pow'r,
To catch the rainbow, and to paint the flow'r
Of many mingling hues ; then smiling said
(But first with laurel crown'd her fav'rite's head),
" These beauteous children, tho' so fair they shine,
" Fade in *my* seasons—let them live in *thine* :"
And live they shall, the charm of ev'ry eye,
Till nature flickers, and the seasons die.

* These beautiful and applicable lines were pronounced by Lord Buchan, on Ednam Hill, on the 22d of September 1791, when he crowned the first edition of the *Seasons* with a wreath of bays.

Anniversary of Thomson's Birth-day, 1790.

THE Earl of Buchan, desirous of promoting a subscription for erecting a monument to the memory of Thomson on Ednam Hill, circulated letters to a considerable number of gentlemen of Berwick and Roxburghshires, in the beginning of September, inviting them to celebrate the 22d of September at a Mrs. Spinks's, in Ednam village, where Sir James Pringle, Sir Alexander Don, Dr. Bell, of Coldstream, the poet's sister's son, and a dozen more gentlemen accordingly met, and passed the evening with attick festivity and good humour, the Earl of Buchan sitting as præses in the chair whereon the poet sat when he composed his *Castle of Indolence*. This chair became the property of Dr. Arm-

strong, who had it from Sir Andrew Mitchel, who left it to Mr. Elliot, and by him it was obligingly sent to accommodate the president member of this society, upon this occasion.

The gentlemen who assembled on this day resolved to meet annually on its anniversary*, and to open a subscription for erecting

* It is remarkable that Mrs. Mary Thomson, sister of the poet, and mother of Mr. Craig, architect, was buried on this day; and that while Lord Buchan was on Ednam Hill to celebrate the anniversary, the son was dropping the last cord into the grave of Thomson's sister.

The same day likewise, though without previous concert, the society, at Ednam, called the Knights of the Cape, met in their hall at Ednam, to celebrate the birth-day of the bard. Mr. Woods, the comedian, recited a handsome occasional poem of his own composition in honour of the day. On the toast being

erecting a monument on Ednam Hill, requesting the Earl of Buchan to apply to the curators of Mr. Cuthbert, of Ednam, the proprietor of Ednam, a minor, for a grant of the spot necessary for the building and its appurtenances.

In returning from this meeting the Earl of Buchan's carriage, in which he was

being given to the memory of Thomson, Mr. Woods recited, from a poem of Dr. Langhorne's, the contest of the Seasons, who are represented as appealing to Thomson to decide on their respective merits. At proper intervals he afterwards delivered passages from the four Seasons of the author, each being followed by songs applicable to the respective subjects, by other members of the society. Mr. Woods then recited a number of passages, selected by him from Thomson's Poem of Liberty; after which Rule Britannia was sung by the whole company on their legs, with which this attack entertainment concluded.

accom-

accompanied by Sir Alexander Don, and Mr. Thomas Potts, writer at Kelfo, was overturned by a restive horse on the approach to Ednam Bridge, but without any worse consequences than the breaking of the machine. In the succeeding year, Lord Buchan obtained a concession of promise from the curators of Mr. Cuthbert, for a grant of the spot necessary for erecting a monument on the summit of Ednam Hill, and he circulated letters to the gentlemen who had attended the former anniversary, and to many other persons of distinction and learning in Scotland ; to Messrs. Hayley, Mason, Beattie, and Burns. But very few gentlemen paid any attention to the notification ; a cast from the bust of the poet in Westminster Abbey, which had been generously transmitted by Mr. Coutts, banker at London, to be crowned

crowned with a wreath of bays, was broken in a midnight frolick during the race week on the 16th of September ; and the Earl of Buchan contented himself with imposing a wreath of laurel, dressed by Mr. Robert Craig, architect, the poet's sister's son, on a copy of the Seasons, printed 1730, in 4to, being the first complete edition presented by the poet to his father, addressing the shade of the poet, in the beautiful apostrophe composed for a blank leaf of the Seasons by the Rev. Mr. William Thomson, of Queen's College, Oxon, a copy of which is here published. I shall now submit to the perusal of the reader, Mr. Burns * the Airshire bard's

* Robert Burns, of Airshire, a farmer's son, remarkable for a genuine vein of Doric poetry, and for his superior abilities and good sense, which have enabled

bard's apology for not attending the meeting, and his address to the shade of Thomson.

MY LORD,

LANGUAGE sinks under the ardour of my feelings, when I would thank your Lordship for the honour, the very great honour, you have done me, in inviting me to the coronation of the bust of Thomson.

bled him to escape the shipwreck of the sons of Apollo, by continuing his profession of a farmer.

Mr. Millar, of Dalswinton, a gentleman well known by his great genius in mechanics, and his eminence as a banker, generously gave the young poet a comfortable and agreeable farm at Ellisland, near Dumfries, where he woos his rustic muse in ease with that native dignity which must ever arise from superior taste. "Spernit humum fugiente penna."

—In

—In my first enthusiasm, on reading the card you did me the honour to write to me, I overlooked every obstacle, and determined to go; but I fear it will not be in my power.—A week or two in the very middle of my harvest, is what I much doubt I dare not venture on.—I once already made a pilgrimage *up* the whole course of the Tweed, and fondly would I take the same delightful journey *down* the windings of that charming stream.

Your Lordship hints at an ode for the occasion: but who would write after Collins? I read over his verses to the memory of Thomson, and despaired. I attempted three or four stanzas in the way of address to the shade of the bard, on crowning his bust.—I trouble your Lordship with the inclosed copy of them, which

I am

I am afraid will be but too convincing a proof how unequal I am to the task you would obligingly assign me.—However, it affords me an opportunity of approaching your Lordship, and declaring how sincerely I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's highly obliged,

And most devoted humble servant,

ROBERT BURNS.

Ellisland, near Dumfries,

29th August, 1791.

ADDRESS TO THE SHADE OF THOMSON,
On crowning his Bust with a Wreath of Bays.

I.

WHILE virgin Spring, by Eden's flood,
Unfolds her tender mantle green ;
Or pranks the sod in frolic mood,
Or tunes Eolian strains between ;

II.

While Summer with a matron grace
Retreats to Dryburgh's cooling shade,
Yet oft delighted stops to trace
The progress of the spiky blade ;

III.

While Autumn, benefactor kind,
By Tweed erects her aged head,
And fees, with self-approving mind,
Each creature on her bounty fed ;

IV.

While maniac Winter rages o'er
The hills whence classic Yarrow flows,
Rouling

Rousing the turbid torrent's roar,
Or sweeping wild a waste of snows;

V.

So long, sweet poet of the year,
Shall bloom that wreath thou well hast won,
While Scotia with exulting tear
Proclaims that Thomson was her son.

THE EARL OF BUCHAN'S INVITATION TO SIR JOHN
SINCLAIR, OF ULBSTER, TO BE PRESENT
AT THE FESTIVAL OF THOMSON. 1791.

SINCLAIR ! thou phoenix of the frozen Thule !
O shape thy course to Tweda's lovely stream,
Whose lucid, sparkling, gently flowing course
Winds like Iliffus through a land of song :
Not as of old, when, like the Theban twins,
Her rival children tore each other's breasts,
And stained her silver wave with kindred blood :
But proudly glittering through a happy land,
The yellow harvests bend along her fields ;
The golden orchards glow with blushing fruits ;
Green are her pastoral banks, white are her flocks,
That safely stray where barb'rous Edward raged ;
And where the din of clashing arms was heard
We hear the carols of the happy swains,
Free as their lords, and with the purring looms,
Hark, hark, the weaver's merry roundelay !
The charming song of Scotland's better day :
'Tis liberty, sweet liberty alone
Can give a lustre to the northern sun.
" Come when the Virgin gives the beauteous days,

“ And Libra weighs in equal scales the year ;”
Come, and to Thomson’s gentle shade repair,
And pour libations to his virtuous muse,
Where first he drew the flame of vital air,
“ Where first his feet did press the virgin snow,
“ And where he tuned his charming Doric reed.”
Perhaps where Thomson fired the soul of song,
Some voice may whisper in Æolian strains
To him who, wand’ring near his parent stream,
Shall o’er the placid blue profound of air
Receive the genius of his passing shade.
Come then, my Sinclair, leave empiric Pitt,
And raging Burke, and all the hodge-podge fry
Of Tory Whigs, and whiggish Tory knaves,
And bathe thy genius in thy country’s fame :
Let Burke write pamphlets, and let Pitt declaim ;
Let us seek honour in our country’s weal.

Eulogy

Eulogy of Thomson, the Poet, delivered by the Earl of Buchan, on Ednam Hill, when he crowned the first edition of the Seasons with a wreath of bays, on the 22d of September, 1791.

GENTLEMEN,

IT has been the custom of that great and truly to be respected nation of the French, to pronounce, at the meetings of men of genius, learning, and taste, the praises of the illustrious dead; and this custom has been adopted by other countries, as, emerging from barbarity, they became gradually sensible of the infinite superiority of men imbued with science, learning, and taste, over the ignorant creatures of imperial power.

U 2

They

They saw, and deplored, the rude institutions of their savage ancestors on the page of history, institutions which covered men with honours, and bestrung them with ribbands, according to the gust and prejudice of illiterate princes, and left the real benefactors and ornaments of society to languish or to pass unnoticed in obscurity. Fortunately born as we have been in the age of a Frederick the Great, and of a Washington, all men possessed of any taste or feeling (and may I add) of common sense, have rejoiced, and do now rejoice, to behold the dignity of human nature beginning to appear amidst the ruins of Gothic superstition and tyranny, and the immortal Prussia, standing like a herald in the procession of ages, to mark the beginning of that order of
men

men who are to banish from the earth the silly delusions of worthless priest-craft, and the monstrous prerogatives of despotic authority.

I think myself happy to have this day the task assigned to me of endeavouring to do justice to the memory of Thomson, which has been prophanelly touched by the rude hands of the pedantic Samuel Johnson, whose fame and reputation indicates the decline of taste in a country that, after having produced an Alfred, a Wallace, a Bacon, a Napier, a Newton, a Buchanan, a Milton, a Hampden, a Fletcher, and a Thomson, can submit to be bullied under the rod of a school-master, or to be led by the strings of the fatchel of a petulant school-boy!

Scotland, Gentlemen, though now full

of men who are above servile compliance with the power of the day, was, in the days of Thomson, a nation of proud and poor nobles and dispirited vassals. Except Belhaven and Fletcher, whom he hardly saw, and Argyll, Stair, Marchmont, and other free spirits, whom delicacy forbids me to mention, there were few in the kingdom who could encourage the poet to rise above the mediocrity of a fettered student of divinity, or to imbue his mind with that noble sentiment of independence by which his life and his writings are characterised and distinguished. In the family of Jerviswood, to which he was introduced by the kindred of his mother, he received the earliest attentions; and some verses of his addressed to one of that family, for the use of some books, are,

are, I believe; still preserved as a specimen of his infantine genius.

That the lady indiscreetly alluded to in the Life of Thomson, should have encouraged him to try his fortune in London, is highly probable; but that she should have deserted him afterwards agrees not with the nature of a spontaneous patronage; for nothing is more natural to patrons than the desire of seeing due attention paid to their recommendations, and following out the objects of their protection to the attainment of honour, that shall reflect upon themselves.

The trifling story about his losing his bundle on his way from Wapping to Mallet's house in London, and the want of his shoes, is in the odour of that vulgar malevolence, which gives a *race* to the works of the *savage* biographer.

The only occasion, when I had the mischance to meet Johnson, was at old Strahan's (the translator of the six first books of the *Æneid*), in Suffolk Street, where I found him and Mallet cobling these books for publication; and there I remember to have heard them repeating this story with glee, after having cut down Dryden, Gawin, Douglas, Trapp, and the other predecessors of poor Strahan, in the translation of the *Æneid*.

Such are the annals of critics, and poetsasters, and with this blacking let them be handed down to posterity, with the shoes of the bard of Ednam.

We are much indebted to Aaron Hill for his kindness to Thomson, and his handsome lines in compliment to Scotland, now in every mouth: no more poetry and prophecy, but matter of fact!

How

How different an Aaron Hill, a Thomas Pennant, and a Thomas Newte, from a Samuel Johnson !

Why, says Johnson, are the dedications to Winter, and the other Seasons, contrary to custom, left out in Thomson's collected works ? I will tell you, shade of Johnson. *Because little men disappear when great men take their proper station.*

The Countess of Hertford, says Johnson, used to invite every summer some poet to hear her verses ; and Thomson, who was called for that purpose, took more delight in carousing with Lord Hertford and his friends, than in assisting her Ladyship's poetical operations, who therefore never gave the poet another summons.

That no earl or countess ever gave
Johnson

Johnson an invitation to the country can excite no wonder, nor that Thomson's genius and independant spirit should lead him to prefer wit and the social board of an accomplished family, to the manufacture of courtly verses, for a verse-sick countess.

Lord Chatham, Lord Temple, Lord Lyttelton, Sir Andrew Mitchel, Dr. Armstrong, Mr. Gray, of Richmond-Hill, and the oily man of God, I have often had the pleasure to hear on the subject of Thomson. All of them agreed in the testimony of his being a gentleman at all points, and a gentleman by God, as well as a poet by nature, far above the degree of our modern poets, that are infused into the house of bards, in imitation of our modern system of peerage.

Of

Of Johnson's criticism on the Poem of Thomson, entitled Liberty, I shall say nothing; but I will take the liberty to say that Britain knows nothing of the liberty that Thomson celebrates!

Thomson

*Thomson to the Sister of his Amanda, at
Bath.*

Kew Lane, Nov. 27, 1742.

MADAM,

GIVE me leave to say that, among all your friends, nobody longs more ardently after the full establishment of your health than I do : first, and foremost, upon your own personal account ; and secondly, from more selfish motives, that you may soon return to supply to us the want of the fun by your company. You may, perhaps, think this compliment a little high-strained ; whereas, upon the faith of a melancholy man, and as I hope to laugh again, I would, for three or four hours of your company, give three or four months of such days as these. But at the
same

same time I must be so bold as to add, that though it be downright deep November, and you, Miss Berry, and Miss Young absent, none of us will push the compliment so far as to verify the French author's observation, who begins his book thus—It was in the month of November, when Englishmen hang and drown themselves—And yet, I am dismal enough, sometimes, nay—would you believe it?—as it were, vapoured. Do, dear Mrs. Robertson, make haste to be well.

Sorely do I grieve not to have been one of your 'squires that day you set out; for, besides the serious pleasure of attending you and your companions, I hear very diverting accounts of the journey, particularly of David's navigation on horseback; how it blew a hard gale of riding with him, driving him now a great way

way on one side, then, helm-a-lee, on the other; how he had almost committed piracy on the highway; and how he was next morning, while asleep, deserted by the ship's crew, and left among the savages. I am furthermore informed that, being thereunto moved by the instigation of a galled backside, and not having the fear of the ladies before his eyes, he was guilty of high treason against their sovereign beauty, by uttering certain base, scandalous, and traitorous words, for the which he must in due time undergo his trial; George Scot *, judge; James Robertson †, attorney general; and William

* George Lewis Scot, afterwards sub-preceptor to the king, and one of the commissioners of excise.

† Mr. Robertson, surgeon to the household at Kew.

Paterfon

Paterfon *, foreman of the jury. But, by their mutual accusations, I find there is a heavy charge against them all.

To think of leaving, nay, for some time actually to have left, distressed ladies under their protection, to travel in the dark through infamous places, through Maidenhead Thicket, where so many robberies had been committed the very day before, is such a stain upon all chivalry, as their return cannot entirely wipe off. They were, indeed, upon the brink of perdition ; for had they not returned, their swords must have been broken over their heads, their arms reversed, and the ban of all gallantry published against them. Nobody would have drunk, no-

* Paterfon, formerly mentioned, who was then a clerk in a computing house, afterwards Thomson's deputy as surveyor of the Leeward Islands.

body would have toasted with them, and nothing but making two or three campaigns in the service of that heroic lady, the Queen of Hungary, could have restored them to any degree of honour.

I hope the ladies have at last got their clothes. To be at Bath, yet debarred from the rooms, must have been a cruel situation to such as knew less how to converse with, and enjoy themselves—the very situation of Tantalus! up to the lip in diversions, without being able to catch a drop of them.—And yet, notwithstanding all these diversions, I do, from my soul, most sincerely pity you, to be so long doomed to a place so delightfully tiresome. Delightfully, did I say? No; it is merely a scene of waking dreams, where nothing but the phantoms of pleasure fly about, without any substance

stance or reality. What a round of silly amusements, what a giddy circle of *nothing* do these children of a larger size run every day! Nor does it only give a gay vertigo to the head, it has equally a bad influence on the heart. When the head is full of nothing but drefs, and scandal, and dice, and cards, and rowly powly, can the heart be sensible to those fine emotions, those tender, humane, generous passions that form the soul of all virtue and happiness! Ah! then, ye lovers, never think to make any impression on the hearts of the dissipated fair. So could I proceed in my tedious homily; but I ask pardon for railing at a place you are obliged to be at, and which I hope will restore you to perfect health. Yes, that reconciles me to it again; and if my letter was not already too long, I would make its panegyric.

May I flatter myself with the hopes of hearing from you? If you send me but your three names, and above them—"We are well," I shall be glad even of that.—Madam, I am sorry to acquaint you, that your husband, once famous for hospitality, has lost it all since you left this place. Pray be so good as to lay your commands upon him, to treat us some night or other with a bowl of punch, that we may drink your healths. My best compliments, my most hearty respects, my—in short, all the good wishes my heart can form, attend you all! Believe me to be,

With the utmost respect,

Madam,

Your, and Miss Young's,

And Miss Berry's,

Devoted humble servant,

JAMES THOMSON.

Humorous

Humorous Epistle to a Friend, on his Travels.

December 7, 1742.

TRUSTY AND WELL-BELOVED DOG,

HEARING you are gone abroad to see the world, as they call it, I cannot forbear, upon this occasion, transmitting you a few thoughts.

It may seem presumption in me to pretend to give you any instruction; but you must know, that I am a dog of considerable experience. Indeed I have not improved so much as I might have done, by my justly deserved misfortunes: the case very often of my betters.

However, a little I have learned; and sometimes, while I seemed to lie asleep before the fire, I have overheard the conversation of your travellers.

In the first place, I will not suppose that you are gone abroad an illiterate cub, just escaped from the lash of your keeper, and running wild about the world like a dog who has lost his master, utterly unacquainted with the proper knowledge, manners, and conversation of dogs.

These are the public jests of every country through which they run post, and frequently they are avoided as if they were mad dogs. None will converse with them but those who shear, sometimes even skin them, and often they return home like a dog who has lost his tail. In short, these travelling puppies do nothing else but run after foreign bitches, learn to dance, cut capers, play tricks, and admire your fine outlandish howling: though in my opinion, our vigorous, deep-mouthed British note is better music.

If

If a timely stop is not put to this, the genuine breed of our ancient sturdy dogs will, by degrees, dwindle and degenerate into dull Dutch mastiffs, effeminate Italian lapdogs, or tawdry, impertinent French harlequins. All our once noble-throated guardians of the house and fold will be succeeded by a mean courtly race, that snarl at honest men, flatter rogues, proudly wear badges of slavery, ribbands, collars, &c. and fetch and carry sticks at the lion's court. By the bye, my dear Marquis, this fetching and carrying of sticks is a diversion you are too much addicted to, and, though a diversion, unbecoming a true independent country dog. There is another dog-vice, that greatly prevails among the hungry whelps at court; but your gut is too well stuffed to fall into that. What I mean is, patting, pawing, solicit-

ing, teasing, snapping the morsel out of one another's mouths, being bitterly envious, and insatiably ravenous, nay, sometimes filching when they safely may. Of this vice I have an instance continually before my eyes, in that wretched animal Scrub, whose genius is quite misplaced here in the country. He has, besides, such an admirable talent at scratching at a door, as might well recommend him to the office of a court-waiter—A word in your ear—I wish a certain two-legged friend of mine had a little of his assiduity. These canine courtiers are also extremely given to bark at merit and virtue, if ill-clad and poor: they have likewise a nice discernment, with regard to those whom their master distinguishes: to such you shall see them go up immediately, and fawning in the most abject manner—

baifer

baiser leur cul. For me, it is always a
maxim with me,

To honour humble worth, and, scorning state,
Piss on the proud inhospitable gate.

For which reason I go scattering my water
every where about Richmond. And now
that I am upon this topic, I must cite
you two lines of a letter from Bounce
(of celebrated memory), to Fop, a dog in
the country to a dog at court. She
is giving an account of her generous
offspring, among which she mentions
two, far above the vice I now censure :

One ushers friends to Bathurst's door,
One fawns at Oxford's on the poor!

Charming dogs! I have little more to
say; but only, considering the great mart
of scandal you are at, to warn you against
flattering those you converse with, and,

the moment they turn to go away, back-biting them—a vice with which the dogs of old ladies are much infected: and you must have been most furiously affected with it here at Richmond, had you not happened into a good family; therefore I might have spared this caution.—One thing I had almost forgot. You have a base custom, when you chance upon a certain fragrant exuvium, of perfuming your carcase with it. Fye! fye! leave that nasty custom to your little, foppish, crop-eared dogs, who do it to conceal their own stink.

My letter, I fear, grows tedious. I will detain you from your slumbers no longer, but conclude by wishing that the waters and exercise may bring down your fat sides, and that you may return a genteel accomplished dog. Pray lick for me, you
happy

happy dog you, the hands of the fair ladies you have the honour to attend. I remember to have had that happiness once, when one, who shall be nameless, looked with an envious eye upon me.

Farewell, my dear Marquis. Return, I beg it of you, soon to Richmond; when I will treat you with some choice fragments, a marrow-bone which I will crack for you myself, and a dessert of high-toasted cheese. I am, without farther ceremony, yours sincerely,

B U F F.

Mi Dewti too Marki. X Scrub's mark.

Letter to Mrs. R. the Sister of Amanda.

Christmas Day, 1742.

MADAM,

I BELIEVE I am in love with some one or all of you; for though you will not

favour me with the scrap of a pen, yet I cannot forbear writing to you again. Is it not however barbarous; not to send me a few soft characters, one pretty name to cheer my eyes withal? How easily some people might make others happy if they would! But it is no small comfort to me, since you will not write, that I shall soon have the pleasure of being in your company. And then, though I were downright picqued, I shall forget it all in a moment.

I cannot help telling you of a very pleasing scene I lately saw.——In the middle of a green field there stands a peaceful lowly habitation; into which having entered, I beheld innocence, sweet innocence, asleep. Your heart would have yearned, your eyes perhaps overflowed with tears of joy, to see how charming
he

he looked ; like a young cherub dropped from Heaven, if they be so happy as to have young cherubs there.

When awaked, it is not to be imagined with what complacency and ease, what soft serenity altogether unmixed with the least cloud, he opened his eyes. Dancing with joy in his nurse's arms, his eyes not only smiled, but laughed—which put me in mind of a certain near relation of his, whom I need not name.

What delights thee so, thou lovely babe ? art thou thinking of thy mother's recovery ? does some kind power impress upon thee a presage of thy future happiness under her tender care ?—I took the liberty to touch him with unhallowed lips, which restored me to the good opinion of the nurse, who had neither forgot nor forgiven my having slighted that favour

once. While thus I gazed with sincere and virtuous satisfaction, I could most pathetically have addressed the gay wretches of the age, the joyless inmates of Bachelor's Hall *, and was ready to repeat Milton's divine Hymn on Marriage :

Hail, wedded Love ! mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise of all things common else !
By thee adulterous lust was driven from men
Among the bestial herds to range ; by thee,
Founded in reason, loyal, just and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother, first were known.
Far be it, &c.

Now that I have been transcribing

* Bachelor's Hall, a house on Richmond Hill, so called, from being occupied during the summer season by a society of gentlemen from London.

some

some lines of poetry, I think I once engaged myself while walking in Kew-lane to write two or three songs. The following is one of them, which I have stolen from the Song of Solomon; from that beautiful expression of Love, "Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me."

I.

O THOU, whose tender serious eyes
Expressive speak the mind I love;
The gentle azure of the skies,
The pensive shadows of the grove:

II.

O mix their beauteous beams with mine,
'And let us interchange our hearts;
Let all their sweetness on me shine,
Pour'd thro' my soul be all their darts.

III.

Ah! 'tis too much! I cannot bear
At once so soft, so keen, a ray:

In pity, then, my lovely fair,
O turn these killing eyes away!

IV.

But what avails it to conceal
One charm, where nought but charms we see?
Their lustre then again reveal,
And let me, Myra, die of thee.

My best respects attend Miss Young
and Miss Berry, who I hope are heartily
tired of Bath, and will leave it without
the least regret, whomsoever they leave
pining behind them. I wish you all a
much happier and merrier Christmas than
we can have without you. But in amends
you will bring us along with you a gay
and happy new year. Believe me to be,
with the greatest respect, and the heartiest
good wishes that all health and happiness
may ever attend you,

Madam,

Your most obedient,

Humble servant,

JAMES THOMSON.

VERSES ADDRESSED TO MISS YOUNG.

AH urge too late ! from beauty's bondage free,
 Why did I trust my liberty with thee ?
 And thou, why didst thou, with inhuman art,
 If not resolv'd to take, seduce my heart ?
 Yes, yes, you said (for lovers eyes speak true) ;
 You must have seen how fast my passion grew :
 And when your glances chanc'd on me to shine,
 How my fond soul ecstatic sprung to thine !

But mark me, fair-one, what I now declare
 Thy deep attention claims, and serious care :
 It is no common passion fires my breast,
 I must be wretched, or I must be blest !
 My woes all other remedy deny ;
 Or, pitying, give me hope, or bid me die.

